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LECTURES
ON THE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE

BY
GEORGE P. MARSH

FIRST SERIES

“What! craue you wine, and haue NILUS to drinke of?”

PESCENNIUS NIGER *to his Soldiers in Egypt*,
G. SANDY'S *Relation*, 1615, p. 99.

REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION.

NEW YORK:
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EDWARD O. JENKINS' SONS, NEW YORK.

TO MY DEAR WIFE,
CAROLINE CRANE MARSH,

WHO DEVOTED TO ME HER YOUTH AND BEAUTY AND HAS GIVEN ME
HER MATURER AGE, HAVING BEEN, FOR MORE THAN FORTY YEARS,
MY EVER FAITHFUL AND MOST AFFECTIONATE COMPANION, MY
WISEST COUNSELLOR AND MY MOST EFFICIENT AID,

This Book,

WHICH OWES, IN LARGE MEASURE, TO HER CULTURE AND HER TASTE
WHATEVER IT MAY POSSESS OF

CRITICAL AND ÆSTHETICAL MERIT,

IS

LOVINGLY AND REVERENTLY DEDICATED.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

THESE Lectures are now offered to the public in the form in which they were left by the Author after a final revision. It will be seen that there are occasional modifications in the text—the result of fresh light thrown on certain points by the critical research of the last twenty years; and much additional matter will be found in the new notes which, it is believed, will increase in no small degree the value of the work.

P R E F A C E .

IN pursuance of a plan for enlarging the means of education afforded by Columbia College in the city of New York, courses of instruction, called Post-graduate Lectures, were organized in the summer of 1858. I was invited by the Trustees of that institution to give readings on the English language. The Lectures which compose the present volume were prepared and delivered in the autumn and winter of 1858-1859, and they are printed very nearly in their original form. The title "Post-graduate" and the Introductory Address sufficiently indicate the class of persons for whom they were designed. It was supposed that the course might extend through two terms, and the plan of the Lectures was arranged accordingly. The purpose of the first or introductory series was to excite a more general interest among educated men and women in the history and essential character of their native tongue, and to recommend the study of the language in its earlier literary monuments rather than through the medium of grammars and linguistic treatises. The second term would have been devoted to what might be called a grammatical history of English literature, or a careful and systematic examination of the origin and progressive development of English, as exhibited in actual practice by the best native writers.

This statement will explain many apparent deficiencies in the Lectures now published, and especially the omission of any notice of the minor dramatists, and of the Scottish dialect and other local peculiarities of English, as well as the small amount

of critical discussion upon the diction, style, and literary merits of different authors.

In selecting illustrations, I have chosen to draw attention to the less known fields of our literature, and I have had recourse to works neither so rare as to be inaccessible, nor, though highly deserving, so common as to be familiar, to most readers. Hence I have seldom cited Shakespeare, Milton, Addison, or other authors whose productions are, or ought to be, in every man's hands, though I am aware that they would often have supplied more apposite quotations than those I have employed. In the number of illustrations I have been sparing, and I have introduced only so many as I thought necessary to make my meaning plain, and, in two or three important cases, to establish the point for which I was contending. It would have been easy to make a show of cheap learning by multiplying extracts, but I have preferred, after pointing out sufficient, and I fear for the most part neglected, sources of instruction, to leave to the reader the pleasant and profitable task of seeking authorities for himself.

The Lectures are addressed to the many, not to the few; to those who have received such an amount of elementary discipline as to qualify them to become their own best teachers in the attainment of general culture, not to the professed grammarian or linguistic inquirer. The well-edited republications of old English authors which have issued from the Boston press, the learned and valuable labors of Mr. Klipstein in Anglo-Saxon philology, and the admirable elucidations of Shakespeare by Mr. White and other American critics, abundantly prove the existence among us of the knowledge and the taste, the further promotion of which has been my special aim. These studies are, we may hope, soon to receive a new impulse and new aids from the publication of a complete dictionary of the English language—a work of prime necessity to all the common moral and literary interests of the British and American people, and which is now in course of execution by the London Philological So-

ciety, upon a plan, and with a command of facilities, that promise the most satisfactory results.

I have only to add, that the occasional allusions to the political condition of Europe are to be understood with reference to the time when the Lectures were delivered, and that subsequent events have not weakened the convictions I have expressed on this important subject.

BURLINGTON, VT., *October 25, 1859.*

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

IN this edition, numerous errors of the copyists of my manuscript and of the press, which through inexperience in proof-reading I had failed to detect, as well as many inadvertences of my own, are corrected, and the appendix is much enlarged. The additions consist principally of citations and proofs in illustration of statements and opinions not sufficiently supported before.

It is with some reluctance that I have multiplied my excerpts and references, because I know that though, in a country not familiar to him, the true angler is thankful to be told where lie the clear lakelets and the fishy brooks, yet he desires no man to catch his trout for him.

But the wealth of English literature is such, that I need not fear to exhaust its stores by twenty pages of quotation; and he who patiently explores its abundant waters, will not fail to find, that, after all that I and other laborers have extracted, there are still as good fish in the sea as ever were caught.

In this edition I entitle this volume, First Series, because I am about to publish a second, consisting of a course of Lectures delivered at the Lowell Institute upon the history of the English language, and particularly of its lexical and grammatical changes, with special reference to its literary capabilities and adaptations.

BURLINGTON, VT., *January 1, 1861.*

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LECTURES

ON

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

LECTURE I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE severe Roman bestowed upon the language of his country the appellation of *patrius sermo*, the paternal or national speech; but we, deriving from the domesticity of Saxon life a truer and tenderer appreciation of the best and purest source of linguistic instruction, more happily name our home-born English the mother-tongue. The tones of the native language are the medium through which the affections and the intellect are first addressed, and they are to the heart and the head of infancy what the nutriment drawn from the maternal breast is to the physical frame. "Speech," in the words of Heyse, "is the earliest organic act of free self-consciousness, and the sense of our personality is first developed in the exercise of the faculty of speech." Without entering upon the speculations of the Nominalists and the Realists, we must admit that, in the process of ratiocination properly called *thought*, the mind acts only by words. "*Cogito, ergo sum*, I think, therefore I am," said Descartes. Whether this is a logical conclusion or not, we habitually, if not necessarily, connect words, thought, and self-recognizing existence, as conditions each of both the others, and hence it is that we have little or no recollection of that portion of our life which preceded our acquaintance with language. Indeed, so necessary are words to thought, to reflection, to the memory of former states of self-conscious being, that though the intelligence of persons born

without the sense of hearing sometimes receives, through the medium of manual signs, and without instruction in words, a very considerable degree of apparent culture, yet, when deaf-mutes are educated and taught the use of verbal language, they are generally almost wholly unable to recall their mental status at earlier periods; and, so far as we are able to judge, they appear to have been previously devoid of those conceptions which we acquire, or at least retain and express, by means of general terms. So, our recollection of moments of intense pain or pleasure, moral or physical, is dim and undefined. Grief too big for words, joy which finds no articulate voice for utterance, sensations too acute for description, when once their cause is removed, or when time has abated their keenness, leave traces deep indeed in tone, but too shadowy in outline to be capable of distinct reproduction; for that alone which is precisely formulated can be clearly remembered.

Nature has made speech the condition and vehicle of social intercourse, and consequently it is essentially so elementary a discipline, that a thorough knowledge of the mother-tongue seems to be presupposed as the basis of all education, and especially as an indispensable preparation for the reception of academic instruction. It is doubtless for this reason, that, in our American system of education, the study of the English language has usually been almost wholly excluded from the collegial curriculum, and recently indeed from humbler seminaries; and therefore so great a novelty as its abrupt transfer from the nursery to the auditorium of a post-graduate course, may seem to demand both explanation and apology.

It is a trite remark, that the national history and the national language begin to be studied only in their decay, and scholars have sometimes shown an almost superstitious reluctance to approach either, lest they should contribute to the aggravation of a symptom whose manifestation might tend to hasten the catastrophe of which it is the forerunner. Indeed, if we listen to some of the voices around us, we are in danger of being persuaded that the decline of our own tongue has not only commenced, but has already advanced too far to be averted or even arrested. If it is true, as is intimated by the author of our most widely circulated dictionary—a dictionary which itself does not explain the

vocabulary of *Paradise Lost*—that it is a violation of the present standard of good taste to employ old English words not used by Dryden, Pope, Gray, Goldsmith, and Cowper; if words which enter into the phraseology of Spenser, and Shakespeare, and Milton, though important “to the antiquary, are useless to the great mass of readers”; and, above all, if the dialect of the authoritative standard of the Christian faith, in the purest, simplest, and most beautiful form in which it has been presented to modern intelligence, is obsolete, unintelligible, forgotten, then, indeed, the English language is decayed, extinct, fossilized, and, like other organic relics of the past, a fit subject for curious antiquarian research and philosophic investigation, but no longer a theme of living, breathing interest.

In reasoning from the past to the present, we are apt to forget that Protestant Christianity and the invention of printing have entirely changed the outward conditions of at least Gothic, not to say civilized, humanity, and so distinguished this new phase of Indo-European life from that old world which lies behind us, that, though all which was true of individual man in the days of Plato and of Seneca and of Abelard is true now, yet most which was then conceived to be true of man as a created and dependent, or as a social being, is at this day recognized as either false or abnormal. The reciprocal relations between the means and the ends of human life are reversed, and the conscious, deliberate aims and voluntary processes and instrumentalities of intellectual action are completely revolutionized. Hence, we are constantly in danger of error, when, in the economy of social man, we apply ancient theories to modern facts, and deduce present effect or predict future consequences from causes which, in remote ages, have produced results analogous to recent or expected phenomena. This is especially true with reference to those studies and those pursuits which are less immediately connected with the fleeting interests of the hour. We are, accordingly, not warranted in concluding that, because the creative spirits of ancient and flourishing Hellenic literature did not concern themselves with grammatical subtleties, but left the syntactical and orthoepical theories of the Greek language to be developed in late and degenerate Alexandria, therefore the study of native philology in commercial London and industrial Manchester proves the decadence of

the heroic speech which, in former centuries, embodied the epic and dramatic glories of English genius.

The impulse to the study of English, and especially of its earlier forms, which has lately begun to be felt in England and in this country, is not a result of the action of domestic causes. It has not grown out of any thing in the political or social condition of the English and American people, or out of any morbid habit of the common language and literature of both, but it had its origin wholly in the contagion of Continental example.

The jealousies and alarms of the turbulent period which followed the first French Revolution, and which suspended the independent political existence of so many of the minor European States, at the same time threatening all with ultimate absorption, naturally stimulated the self-conscious individuality of every race, and led them alike to attach special value to every thing characteristic, every thing peculiar, in their own constitution, their own possessions, their own historic recollections, as conservative elements, as means of resistance against an influence which sought, first, to denationalize, and then to assimilate them all to its own social and governmental system. Hence, contemporaneously with the wars of that eventful crisis, there sprung up a universal spirit of local inquiry, local pride, and local patriotism; the history, the archæology, the language, the early literature, of every European people, became objects of earnest study, first with its own scholars, then with allied nations or races, and, finally, by the power of international sympathy, and the unexpected light which etymological researches have thrown on some of the most interesting questions belonging to present psychology and to past history, with enlightened and philosophic thinkers everywhere.

The people of England were less agitated by the fears which disturbed the repose of the Continental nations, and they are constitutionally slow in yielding either to moral, to intellectual, or to material influences from without. Accordingly, while the philologists and historians of Denmark* and of Germany were stu-

* Thorkelin had prepared the poem of Beowulf for publication as early as 1807, but the press copy was destroyed in the siege of Copenhagen. He, however, renewed his labors, and in 1815, brought out the first edition of that important work. Five years later, Grundtvig published a Danish version of Beowulf, with emendations, in a great measure conjectural, of the original printed

diously investigating and elucidating the course of Anglo-Saxon history, the laws of the Anglo-Saxon language, and the character of its literature, as things cognate with their own past glories and future aspirations, few native English inquirers busied themselves with studies whose obscure, though real, connection with the stirring events of that epoch no timid sensitiveness had yet taught the British mind to feel. It was only when the new political relations between England and the important Germanic States had awakened the dormant moral and intellectual sympathies between these nations, that the literature and the learning of Germany became objects of interest and sources of instruction to British scholars. To that period we trace the first impulses whose gradual action has led to the tardy revival of national philology in England, and the labors of Danish and German linguists form the real groundwork of all that native inquirers have since accomplished. If I were to refer to any individual as having been specially influential in this direction, I should cite the example and the labors of Max Müller. Müller has not, so far as I know, made old English philology a specialty, but he has given an immense impulse to the revived study of Oriental and general Linguistics, and this, by the *commune vinculum* which exists between all knowledges, has made itself felt in every department of English intellectual effort. If we compare the critical and scientific Periodical Literature of England at the beginning with that at the end of the generation now drawing to its close, we shall find an advance seldom paralleled in the history of human culture. This difference is, I believe, in a great measure to be ascribed to the influence I have mentioned.

But although the interest now manifested in the history and true linguistic character of the English speech originated in external movements, yet it must be admitted that it is, at this moment, strengthened in England by a feeling of apprehension concerning the position of that country in coming years—an apprehension which, notwithstanding occasional manifestations of heredi-

by Thorkelin. These are among the earliest and most successful instances of the application of sound learning and critical sagacity to the restoration of corrupt texts. Rask, also a Dane, published in 1817, the first *complete* Anglo-Saxon grammar, and this has only lately been superseded by the labors of our countryman, Prof. March.

tary confidence and pride, is a very widely prevalent sentiment among the British people. Recent occurrences have inspired an anxiety amounting almost to alarm, concerning their relations with their nearest, as well as their more remote, Continental neighbors, and those who compare the policy and position of England in 1815, 1851, and 1859, may well be pardoned for some misgivings with regard to the present tendencies of the British social and political state. In such circumstances, it is natural that enlightened Englishmen should cherish a livelier attachment to all that is great and reverend in the memories of their early being, and thought, and action, and should regard with increasing interest the monuments that record the series of intellectual and physical triumphs by which the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman raised the Empire they successively conquered to such an unexampled pitch of splendor and of power.

Modern philology, then, did not, like ancient grammatical lore, originate in the life-and-death struggle of perishing nationalities, nor in a morbid consciousness of internal decay and approaching dissolution, but in a sound, philosophic appreciation of the surest safeguard of national independence and national honor—an intelligent comprehension, namely, of what is good and what is great in national history, national institutions, national character. It is a pulsation of life, not a throe of death; a token of regeneration, not a sign of extinction. The zeal with which these studies are pursued is a high expression of intellectual patriotism, a security against the perils of absorption and centralization which are again menacing the commonwealths of the Eastern Continent, a bulwark against the dangers with which what exists of Continental liberty is threatened, now by the ambitious dreams of French Cæsarism and of German 'nationality,' now by Muscovite barbarism, and now by pontifical obscurantism.

The fruits of increased attention to domestic philology have been strikingly manifested in the reviving literatures, and in the awakening moral and political energies, of many lesser European peoples, which, until the agitations I speak of, seemed to be fast sinking into forgetfulness and inaction. States and races, long deemed insignificant and decrepit, have given a fresh impulse to the intellectual movement of our age, and, at the same time, are throwing up new barricades against the encroachments of

the great Continental despotisms. Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, have roused themselves to the creation of new letters, and the manifestation of a new popular life. The European Continent is to-day protesting against being Teutonized, as energetically as it did, at the beginning of this century, against a forced conformity to a Gallic organization; and we may well hope that the same spirit will be found equally potent to resist the Pan-slavic invasion, which will be the next source of danger to the civil and intellectual liberties of Christendom.

There are circumstances in the inherent character of the English language which recommend—there are circumstances in its position which demand—the most sedulous and persevering investigation. I will not here speak of what belongs to another part of our course—the general value and importance of linguistic inquiry—but I will draw your attention to the multifarious etymology of our Babylonish vocabulary, and to the composite structure of our syntax, as peculiarities of the English tongue not shared in an equal degree by any other European speech known in literature, and requiring an amount of systematic study not in other cases usually necessary. The groundwork of English, indeed, can be, and best is, learned at the domestic fireside—a school for which there is no adequate substitute; but the knowledge there acquired is not, as in homogeneous languages, a root out of which will spontaneously grow the flowers and the fruits which adorn and enrich the speech of man. English has been so much affected by extraneous, alien, and discordant influences, so much mixed with foreign ingredients, so much overloaded with adventitious appendages, that it is, to most of those who speak it, in a considerable degree a conventional and arbitrary symbolism. The Anglo-Saxon tongue has a craving and accommodating appetite, and is as rapacious of words and as tolerant of forms, as are its children of territory and of religions. But, in spite of its power of assimilation, there is much of the speech of England which has never become connatural to the Anglican people, and its grammar has passively suffered the introduction of many syntactical combinations which are not merely irregular, but repugnant. It has lost its original organic law of progress, and its present growth is by accretion, not by develop-

ment. I shall not here inquire whether this condition of English is an evil. There are many cases where a complex and cunningly-devised machine, dexterously guided, can do that which the congenital hand fails to accomplish; but the computing of our losses and gains, the striking of our linguistic balance, belongs elsewhere. Suffice it to say, that English is not a language which teaches itself by mere unreflecting usage. It can be mastered, in all its wealth, in all its power, only by conscious, persistent labor; and, therefore, when all the world is awaking to the value of general philological science, it would ill become us to be slow in recognizing the special importance of the study of our own tongue.*

But, in order that this study may commend itself to the popular mind, its value and its interest must first be made apparent to the thinking spirits by whom the current of public opinion is determined. Knowledge has its sources on the heights of humanity, and culture derives its authority from the example of the acknowledged leaders of society. Studies neglected or undervalued by the educated man, will have still less attraction for the pupil, and English philology cannot win its way to a form in American high-schools, until it shall have been recognized as a worthy pursuit by the learned and the wise, who are no longer subject to the authority of academic teachers.

But, great as is the practical importance of the knowledge of words, let it not be said that, for its sake alone, we encourage inquiry into the structure and constitution of national speech. The

* For easie obtaining is enemie to iudgement, not onlie in words and naturall speche, but in greater matters and verie important. Advised & considerat cumming by, as it proves by those tungs, which we learn by art, where time and trauell be the compassing means, emplanteth in wits both certaintie to rest on & assurance to rise by. Our natural tung cummeth on vs by huddle, and therefor hedelesse, foren language is labored, and therefor learned, the one still in vse and neuer well known, the other well known and verie seldom vsed. And yet continewal vse should enfer knowledge, in a thing of such vse, as the naturall deliurie of our mind and meaning is. And to saie the truth what reason is it, to be acquainted abroad and a stranger at home? to know foren tungs by rule, and our own but by rote? If all other men had been so affected, to make much of the foren, and set light by their own, as we seme to do, we had neuer had these things we like of so much, we should neuer by comparing haue discerned the better—*Richard Mulcaster, First Part of the Elementarie, 1622, p. 167.*

discipline we advocate embraces a broader range, and extends itself to the scientific notion of philology, which, though familiar in German literature, has not yet become the recognized meaning of the word in English. The course we propose includes, naturally and necessarily, the study of those old English writers, in whose works we find, not only the most forcible forms of expression, but a marvellous affluence of the mighty thoughts out of which has grown the action that has made England and her children the wonder and the envy of the world. With respect to the technicalities of primitive grammar and etymology, the radical forms of structure which characterize our ancient tongue, the American student has but narrow means of original research. His investigations must, for the present, be pursued at second hand, by the aid of materials inadequate in themselves, and too often collected with little judgment or discrimination. The standard of linguistic science in England is, or rather till recently has been, comparatively low. British scholars have produced few satisfactory discussions of Anglo-Saxon or Old-English inflectional or structural forms, and it is to Teutonic zeal and learning that we must still look for the elucidation of many points of interest connected with the form and the signification of primitive English. A large proportion of the relics of Anglo-Saxon and of early English literature remains yet unpublished, or has been edited with so little sound learning and critical ability as to serve less to guide than to lead astray. Hence, in the determination of ancient texts, we must often accept hasty conjecture, or crude opinion, in place of established fact. But a better era has commenced. Englishmen have learned from Continental linguists to do what native scholarship and industry had hitherto failed to accomplish ;* and we may hope that, at no distant day,

* The recent admirable editions of Layamon, of the Ormulum, and of the Wycliffite translations of the Scriptures, are exceedingly valuable contributions to English philology, and in the highest degree creditable to the critical skill and industry of the eminent scholars who have prepared and published them. The publications of the various Literary Societies which occupy themselves with old English literature, are of very unequal value, and some of them, certainly, both intrinsically worthless, and badly edited. But, notwithstanding the sneers of Garnett,† there are few students of our early literature who have

† See latter part of last note to p. 304.

the yet hidden treasures of British philology will all be made accessible, and permanently secured for future study, by means of the art which has been styled

Ars omnium Artium Conservatrix.

The general inferiority of English and French to Scandinavian and Teutonic scholars, in philological and especially etymological research, is a remarkable but an indisputable fact, and its explanation is not obvious. I can by no means ascribe the difference to an inherent inaptitude on our part for such subtle investigations, to a native insensibility to the delicate relations between allied sounds and allied significations; but I believe the cause to lie much in the different intellectual habits which are formed, in early life, by the use of the respective languages of these nations. The German is remarkably homogeneous in its character. An immense proportion of its vocabulary consists either of simple primitives, or of words obviously drawn by composition or derivation from radicals still existing in current use as independent vocables. Its grammatical structure is of great regularity, and there are few tongues where the conformity to general rules is so universal, and where isolated, unrelated philological facts are so rare. At the same time, there is enough of grammatical inflection to familiarize the native speaker with syntactical principles imperfectly exemplified in French and English, and there is a sufficiently complex arrangement of the period to call into constant exercise the logical faculties required for the comprehension and application of the rules of universal grammar. While, therefore, I by no means maintain that German has any superiority over English for the purposes of poetry or of miscellaneous literature, for those of general social intercourse or the ordinary cares and duties of life, yet, as in itself an intellectual and especially a linguistic discipline, it has great advantages over any of the

not derived very important aid from the labors of Halliwell and of Wright. The value of Kemble's and Thorpe's contributions to our knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon language and literature is too familiar to require special notice; and I need not here speak of the eminent British ethnological and grammatical, or rather linguistic, inquirers of the present day, because this course of lectures is confined to quite another field, and I shall only incidentally have occasion to refer to them.

tongues which embody the general literature of modern Europe. The German boy comes out of the nursery scarcely a worse grammarian, and a far better etymologist, than the ancient Roman, and is already imbued with a philological culture which the Englishman and the Frenchman can only acquire by years of painful study. Hence we account readily for the comparative excellence of the German dictionaries and other helps to the full knowledge of the language, while in English, having no grammar, we have till lately possessed no grammars, and we still want a dictionary. In both English and French, the etymology is foreign or obscured by great changes of form, the syntax is arbitrary and conventional (so far as those terms can be applied to any thing in language), the inflections are bald and imperfectly distinguished, and the number of solitary exceptional facts, especially in French, is very great. When I speak of the poverty of French inflections, I am aware I contradict the accident, which shows a very full system of varied terminations; but the native language is learned by the ear, and the spoken tongue of France reduces its multitude of written endings to a very small list of articulated ones. The signs of number and of person, and often of tense and gender, to which the inflections are restricted, though well marked in written French, disappear almost wholly in pronunciation, and for those who only speak, they are non-existent.* While, therefore, for speaking French by rote, as natives do all tongues, no grammar is needed, yet few written dialects require grammatical aid more imperiously; but, at the same time, the grammar is of so special a character as to teach little of general linguistic principle.

The German philologist, then, begins where the Englishman and the Frenchman leave off—or, rather, at a point to which the great mass of French and English literary men never attain; and, with such an advantage in the starting ground, it would be strange if he did not outstrip his rivals.

The American student shares with the Englishman and Frenchman in the lack of early grammatical discipline, and, possessing

* *Aimais, aimait, aimaient* are identical in sound; and *aimer, aimez, aimai, aimé, aimée, aimées*, and *aimées*, differ so little from the former group, that ignorant persons often confound them all in writing, as well as in speaking.

few large libraries, no collections of early editions, no repositories of original manuscripts, he labors under the further inconvenience of a want of access to the primitive sources of etymological instruction. For the present, therefore, he must renounce the ambition of adding anything to the existing stores of knowledge respecting English philology, and content himself with the humbler and more selfish aim of appropriating and elaborating the material which more fortunate and better trained European scholars have gathered or discovered. We must, in the main, study English with reference to practical use, rather than to philosophic principle; aim at the positive and the concrete, rather than the absolute and the abstract. And this falls in with what is eminently, I will not say happily, the present tendency of the American mind. We demand, in all things, an appreciable, tangible result, and if a particular knowledge cannot be shown to have a *value*, it is to little purpose to recommend its cultivation because of its *worth*. We must all, then, men of action and men of thought alike, study English in much the same way, and by the aid of the same instrumentalities—the practical man, because he aims at a practical end; the philosophic thinker, because he is destitute of the means of approximating to *his* end by any higher method than the imperfect course which alone is open to the American scholar.

There are circumstances which recommend the study of English especially to us Americans, others which appeal equally to all who use the Anglican speech. Of the former, most prominent is the fact that we, in general, require a more comprehensive knowledge of our own tongue than any other people. Except in mere mechanical matters, and even there far more imperfectly, we have adopted the principle of the division of labor to a more limited extent than any modern civilized nation. Every man is a dabbler, if not a master, in every knowledge. Every man is a divine, a statesman, a physician and a lawyer to himself, as well as a counsellor to his neighbors, on all the interests involved in the sciences appropriately belonging to those professions. We all read books, magazines, newspapers, all attend learned lectures, and too many of us, indeed, write the one, or deliver the other. We resemble the Margites of Homer, who Πόλλ' ἠπίστατο ἔργα, practised every art, and if, as he κακῶς δ' ἠπίστατο

av'ra, bungled in all, we too must fall short of universal perfection, we still need, with our multifarious strivings, an encyclopedic training, a wide command over the resources of our native tongue, and, more or less, a knowledge of all its special nomenclatures. But this very fact of the general use of the whole English vocabulary among us is a dangerous cause of corruption of speech, against which the careful study of our language is an important antidote. Things much used inevitably become much worn, and it is one of the most curious phenomena of language, that words are as subject as coin to defacement and abrasion by brisk circulation. The majority of those who speak any tongue incline to speak it imperfectly; and where all use the dialect of books, the vehicle of the profoundest thoughts, the loftiest images, the most sacred emotions that the intellect, the fancy, the heart of man has conceived, there special precautions are necessary to prevent that medium from becoming debased and vulgarized by corruptions of form, or, at least, by association with depraved beings and unworthy themes. While, therefore, I would open to the humble and the unschooled the freest access to all the rich treasures which English literature embodies, I would inculcate the importance of a careful study of genuine English, and a conscientious scrupulosity in its accurate use, upon all who in any manner occupy the position of teachers or leaders of the American mind, upon all whose habits, whose tastes or whose vocations lead them to speak oftener than to hear.

But, as I observed, there are considerations, common to the Englishman and the American, which powerfully recommend the study of our language to thinking men. One of the most important of these is a repetition of the argument I have just used, but in a more extended application. I allude to what, for want of any other equally appropriate epithet, I must characterize by a designation much abused both by those who rally under it as a watchword of party and by those to whom it is a token of offence—I mean the *conservatism* of such studies. It is doubted by the ablest judges, whether, except in the introduction of new names for new things, English has made any solid improvement for two centuries and a half; and few are sanguine enough to believe that future changes in its structure, or in its vocabulary, unless in the way just stated, will be changes for the better. It

is obvious, too, that, in proportion as new grammatical forms and new designations for familiar things and thoughts are introduced, older ones must grow obsolete; and, of course, the existing, and especially the earlier, literature of England will become gradually less intelligible. The importance of a permanent literature, of authoritative standards of expression, and, especially, of those great, lasting works of the imagination and the intellect, which, in all highly-cultivated nations, constitute the "*volumes paramount*" of their literature, has been too generally appreciated to require here argument or illustration. Suffice it to say, they are among the most potent agencies in the cultivation of the national mind and heart, the strongest bond of union in a homogeneous people, the surest holding-ground against the shifting currents, the ebb and flow, of opinion and of taste.

The Anglo-Saxon race is fortunate in possessing more such volumes paramount than any other modern people. The Greeks had their moral and sententious Hesiod; their great tragic trio; their comic Aristophanes and Menander; and, above all, their epic Homer, whose story and whose speech were more closely interwoven with the very soul of the whole Hellenic people than was ever other secular composition with the life of man; the Romans had Ennius, and Terence, and Plautus, and, at last, but only when all was lost, Horace and Virgil; the Italians have Dante, and Petrarch, and Tasso, and Ariosto; the Icelanders have *Laxdæla*, the story of Njáll, and the Chronicles of Snorro;* and we, more favored than all, have Chaucer, and Spenser, and Shakespeare, and Milton—each, in his own field, as great as the mightiest that ever wielded pen in the like kind; and, beyond these, we have the oracles of our faith, stamped with the self-approving impress of certain verity, and rendered, by English pens, in a form of rarer beauty than has elsewhere clothed the words of God in the speech of man.

* The Icelandic sagas, though containing many short, rhythmical lays, are not versified, and therefore not poems in the usual sense of the word. But they are highly poetical in conception and treatment, and thus unite the fascination of more artificial forms of composition with the attractions of authentic history. In the civilization of the Scandinavian people, the prose saga occupied much the same place as the metrical epic in the life of the Greeks, or the heroic ballad in other modern nations, and it may therefore fairly claim a place in imaginative literature.

Now, all these books have been for centuries a daily food, an intellectual pabulum, that actually has entered into and moulded the living thought and action of gifted nations ; and, in the case of the Anglican people, it will not be disputed that, working as they have, all in one direction, their great poets have been more powerful than any other secular influence in first making, and then keeping, the Englishman and the American what they are, what for hundreds of years they have been, what, God willing, for thousands they shall be, the pioneer race in the march of man towards the highest summits of worthy human achievement.

The path of national literatures is like the orbit of those comets which long approach the central source of light and warmth, and long recede, but never return to the perihelion ; and the language of a people has ordinarily but one period of culmination. When genius has evolved the best thoughts of a given state of society, and elaborated the choicest forms of expression of which a given speech is capable, it has anticipated and appropriated the greatest results of that condition of human life ; and the subsequent literature is but reproductive, not creative in its character, until some mighty, and for the time destructive, revolution has dissolved and re-amalgamated the elements of language and of social life in new and diverse combinations.

That the English tongue, and the men who speak it, will yet achieve great victories in the field of mind, great works in the world of sense, we have ample self-conscious assurance ; but, in the existing state of society, it is vain to expect that any future literary productions can occupy the place, or exert the deep, pervading influence, of the volumes I have named. To them, therefore, and to the dialect which is their medium, the instinct of self-preservation impels us tenaciously to cling ; and when, through our appetite for novelty, our incurious neglect of the beautiful and the great, these volumes cease to be authorities in language, standards of moral truth and æsthetical beauty, and inspirers of thought and of action, we shall have lost the springs of national greatness which it most concerned us to preserve.

We hear much, in political life, of recurrence to first principles, and startling novelties not unfrequently win their way to popular acceptance under that disguise. With equal truth, and greater sincerity, we may say that, in language and in literature,

nothing can save us from ceaseless revolution but a frequent recourse to the primitive authorities and the recognized canons of highest perfection.

In commencing the study of early English, young persons are not unfrequently repelled by differences of form, which seem to demand a considerable amount of labor to master, and the really trifling difficulties of our archaic dialect are magnified into insurmountable obstacles. Unhappily, English scholars, themselves often better instructed in other tongues than in their own, have very frequently sanctioned the mistake, and encouraged the indolence of contemporary readers, by editing modernized editions of good old authors, and, in thus clothing them anew, so changed their outward aspect, and often their essential character, that the parents would scarcely be able to recognize their own progeny. The British press has teemed with mutilated and disguised editions, while scrupulously faithful reprints of early English works have, until lately, not been often attempted, or ever well encouraged. As a general rule, in the printing of old manuscripts, and in the republication of works which genius and time have sealed with the stamp of authority, no change whatever, except the correction of obvious clerical or typographical errors, should be tolerated; and even this should be ventured on only with extreme caution, because it often turns out that what is hastily assumed to have been a misspelling or a misprint, is, in fact, a form deliberately adopted by a writer better able to judge what was the true orthography for the time, than any later scholar can be.

The rule of Coleridge has nowhere a juster application than here: That, when we meet an apparent error in a good author, we are to presume ourselves 'ignorant of his understanding, until we are certain that we understand his ignorance.' The number of scholars who are so thoroughly possessed of the English of the sixteenth, not to mention earlier centuries, as to be safely intrusted with the *correction* of authors of that period, is exceedingly small, and I doubt whether it would be possible to cite a single instance where this has been attempted, without grievous error, while, in most cases, the book has been not merely lessened in value, but rendered worse than useless for all the purposes of philology and true literature.

But for the unfortunate readiness with which editors and pub-

lishers have yielded to the popular demand for conformity to the spelling and the vocabulary of the day, the knowledge of genuine English would now be both more general and further advanced than it is. The habit of reading books as they were written would have kept up the comprehension, if not the use, of good old forms and choice words which have irrecoverably perished, and the English of the most vigorous period of our literature would not now be sneered at as obsolete and unintelligible.

After all, the difficulties of acquiring a familiar acquaintance with the dialect of the reign of Edward III. are extremely small. Let not the student be discouraged by an antiquated orthography,* or now and then a forgotten word, and a month's study will enable him to read, with entire readiness and pleasure, all that the genius of England has produced during the five centuries that have elapsed since English literature can be said to have had a being.

I cannot, of course, here dilate upon the value of a familiarity with the earlier English writers, but I may, perhaps, be indulged in a momentary reference to the greatest of them, the perusal of whose works alone would much more than compensate the little labor required to understand the dialect in which they are written. Neither the prose nor the verse of the English literature of the fourteenth century comes up to the elaborate elegance and the classic finish of Boccaccio and of Petrarch. But in original power, and in all the highest qualities of poetry, no Continental writer of that period, with the single exception of Dante, can for a moment be compared with Chaucer, who, only less than Shakespeare, deserves the epithet, "myriad-minded," so happily applied by Coleridge to the great dramatist. He is eminently the creator

* The irregularity of the spelling in early English books is very frequently chargeable almost wholly to the printer. The original manuscript of the *Ormulum* is nearly as uniform in its orthography as the most systematic modern writers, and some of the codices on which Paul's edition of Gower is founded are described as scarcely less consistent in their spelling.—See *post*, Lectures *xx.* and *xxi.*

I must protest against the lengths to which German philologists have sometimes gone in the restoration, or rather reconstruction, of old writings. Some authors have been so diguised in this way that they would not be able to read, or even recognize, a line of their own works clothed in the orthography which modern scholars know they never used, but think they ought to have adopted.

of our literary dialect, the introducer, if not the inventor, of some of our finest poetical forms, and so essential were his labors in the founding of our national literature, that, without Chaucer, the seventeenth century could have produced no Milton, the nineteenth no Keats.* It is from defect of knowledge alone, that his diction and his versification have been condemned as rude and unpolished. There are, indeed, some difficulties in his prosody which have not yet been fully solved; but these will doubtless chiefly yield to a more critical revision of the text, and even with the corrupt reading of the old printed editions, the general flow of his verse is scarcely inferior to the melody of Spenser. There can be little doubt that his metrical system was in perfect accordance with the orthoepy of his age, and it was near two centuries before any improvements were made upon his diction or his numbers.

I remarked that there are circumstances in the position and the external relations of the English language, which recommend its earnest study and cultivation. I refer, of course, to the commanding political influence, the wide-spread territory, and the commercial importance of the two great mother-countries whose vernacular it is. Although England is no longer at the head of the European political system, yet she is still the leading influence in the sphere of commerce, of industry, of progressive civilization, and of enlightened Christian philanthropy.

The British capital is at the geographical centre of the terrestrial portion of the globe, and while other great cities represent

* I must here, once for all, make the sad concession that many of Chaucer's works are disfigured, stained, polluted, by a grossness of thought and of language which strangely and painfully contrasts with the delicacy, refinement, and moral elevation of his other productions. The only apology, or rather palliation of this offence, is that which serves to excuse similar transgressions in Shakespeare; namely, that the thoughts, the images, the words, are such as belong to the character presented, or for the time assumed, by the poet; and we must remember that the moral and religious degradation of the fourteenth was far deeper and more pervading than that of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In speaking of the relations of Chaucer to the author of *Paradise Lost*, I, of course, refer to *language* only, and especially to the diction of the minor poems of Milton, which are as important in any just view of his poetical character as his great epic itself. Keats, both in verbal form and in the higher qualities of poetry, is constantly reminding us of the more imaginative works of Chaucer.

individual nationalities, or restricted and temporary aims, the lasting cardinal interests of universal humanity have their brightest point of radiation in the city of London.

The language of England is spoken by greater numbers than any other Christian speech, and it is remarkable that, while some contemporaneous dialects and races are decaying and gradually disappearing from their natal soil, the English speech and the descendants of those who first employed it are making hourly conquests of new territory, and have already established their posts within hailing distance throughout the circuit of the habitable globe. The English language is the special organ of all the great, world-wide charities which so honorably distinguish the present from all preceding ages. With little of the speculative universal philanthropy which has been so loudly preached and so little practised elsewhere, the English people have been foremost in every scheme of active benevolence, and they have been worthily seconded by their American brethren. The English Bible has been scattered by hundreds of millions over the face of the earth, and English-speaking missionaries have planted their maternal dialect at scores of important points, to which, had not their courageous and self-devoting energy paved the way, not even the enterprise of trade could have opened a path. Hence, English is emphatically the language of commerce, of civilization, of social and religious freedom, of progressive intelligence, and of active catholic philanthropy; and, therefore, beyond any tongue ever used by man, it is of right the cosmopolite speech.

That it will ever become, as some dream, literally universal in its empire, I am indeed far from believing; nor do I suppose that the period will ever arrive, when our many-sided humanity will content itself with a single tongue. In the incessant change which all language necessarily undergoes, English itself will have ceased to exist, in a form identifiable with its present character, long before even the half of the human family can be so far harmonized and assimilated as to employ one common medium of intercourse. Languages adhere so tenaciously to their native soil, that, in general, they can be eradicated only by the extirpation of the races that speak them. To take a striking instance: the Celtic has less vitality, less power of resistance, than any other speech accessible to philological research. In its whole

known history it has made no conquests, and it has been ever in a waning condition, and yet, comparatively feeble as is its self-sustaining power, two thousand years of Roman and Teutonic triumphs have not stifled its accents in Britain or in Gaul. It has died only with its dying race, and centuries may yet elapse before English shall be the sole speech of England itself.

In like manner, not to notice other sporadic ancient dialects, the primitive language of Spain, after a struggle of two and twenty centuries with Phœnicians, and Celts, and Carthaginians, and Romans, and Goths, and Arabs, is still the daily speech of half a million of people. If, then, such be the persistence of language, how can we look forward to a period when English shall have vanquished and superseded the Chinese and the Tartar dialects, the many tongues of polyglot India, the yet surviving Semitic speeches in their wide diffusion, and the numerous and powerful Indo-European languages, which are even now disputing with it the mastery? In short, the prospect of the final triumph of any one tongue is as distant, as improbable, I may add as undesirable, as the subjection of universal man to one monarchy, or the conformity of his multitudinous races to one standard of color, one physical type. The Author of our being has implanted in us our discrepant tendencies, for wise purposes, and they are, indeed, a part of the law of life itself. Diversity of growth is a condition of organic existence, and so long as man possesses powers of spontaneous development and of action, so long as he is more and better than a machine, so long he will continue to manifest outward and inward differences, unlikeness of form, antagonisms of opinion, and varieties of speech. But, though English will not supersede, still less extirpate, the thousand languages now spoken, it is not unreasonable to expect for it a wider diffusion, a more commanding influence, a more universally acknowledged beneficent action, than has yet been reached, or can hereafter be acquired, by any ancient or now existent tongue; and we may hope that the great names which adorn it will enjoy a wider and more durable renown than any others of the sons of men.

These brief remarks do but hint the importance of the studies I am advocating, and it will be the leading object of my future discourses more fully to expound their claims, and to point out the best method of pursuing them.

A series of lessons upon the technicalities of English philology would, it is thought, be premature ; and, moreover, adequate time and means for the execution of an undertaking, involving so vast an amount of toil, have not yet been given. That must be the work, if not of another laborer, at least of other years, and our present readings must be regarded only as a collection of miscellaneous observations upon the principles of articulate language, as exemplified in the phonology, vocabulary, and syntax of English ; or, in other words, as a course *preparatory* to a course of lectures on the English tongue. Such as I describe the course, too, I shall endeavor to make each individual lecture—namely, a somewhat informal presentation of some one or more philological laws or general facts, in their connection with the essential character or historical fortunes of our own speech.

The lectures are, under the circumstances, essentially an experiment, the character and tastes of the small audiences I am encouraged to expect, uncertain ; but the necessities of the case have decided the character of the series for me, and, as in many other instances where external conditions control our action, in a way which my own judgment would probably have approved.

The preparation of a series of thoroughly scientific discourses upon the English tongue, within the time and with the means at my command, was impossible ; and I have therefore adopted the plan described, as the only practicable course, and, not improbably, also the best. This point being disposed of, there remains only the embarrassment arising from the uncertainty as to the amount of philological attainment generally possessed by my audience. I have thought myself authorized to presume that, however small in number, it would embrace persons somewhat widely separated in degree of culture, and as I desire to make my discourses, so far as it lies in my power, acceptable, if not instructive, to all, I shall ask the scholar sometimes to pardon familiar, even trite, statements of principle, illustrations which can scarcely claim to be otherwise than trivial, and repetitions which clearness and strength of impression may render necessary for some, while I shall hope the less advanced will excuse me when I indulge in speculations designed for those to whom long study has rendered recondite doctrine more intelligible. In the main, I shall address you as persons of liberal culture, prepared, by gen-

eral philological education, to comprehend linguistic illustrations drawn from all not widely remote and unfamiliar sources, but who, from unexcited curiosity or the superior attractions and supposed claims of other knowledges, have not made the English language a matter of particular study, thought, or observation; and such I shall hope to convince that the subject is possessed of sufficient worth and sufficient interest to deserve increased attention as a branch of American education.

I must here enter a protest against the fashionable American craze for sending young men and young women abroad after the completion of their academic instruction, not to cultivate European literature or to study European art, but to figure in society by assuming to speak two or three Continental languages. At that age they have already lost the delicacy of ear and the flexibility of the vocal organs that make the acquisition of foreign tongues so easy in early childhood, and, though an adult may profitably study the literature of tongues not his own, in general the attempt to *speak* them only renders him ridiculous, though the politeness of his hearers may lead them not only to suppress a smile, but even to bestow a very ill-merited compliment. If parents are able to take their *young children* abroad for a sufficient time, they may *then* acquire a familiarity with one or more foreign languages which will be useful to them in later life, whether for literary or for social purposes; but it must be remembered that no man acquires a *mastery* of a foreign language without losing something of his command over his native speech, and in very many cases it will be found that a partial knowledge of French, German, or Italian is purchased at a price which greatly exceeds its value.

LECTURE II.

ORIGIN OF SPEECH AND OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

ALTHOUGH, for the reasons assigned in the introductory lecture, the plan I propose to pursue does not conform to philosophic method, it will not be amiss to follow the example of more scientific speakers, by prefacing these lessons with a formal announcement of the subject to be discussed, and a definition of the terms of art employed in propounding it.

The course upon which we are now about to enter has for its subject the ENGLISH LANGUAGE, the mother-tongue of most, and the habitual speech of all, to whom these lectures are addressed. It may seem that the adjective *English*, and the noun *language*, are so familiar to the audience, and so clearly and distinctly defined in their general use, that no inquiry into their history can make their meaning plainer. But our business is with words, and it will not be superfluous to examine into the origin and grounds of the signification ascribed even to terms so well understood as those which express the subject of our discourse.

Neither the epithet nor the substantive is of indigenous growth. The word *language* is derived, through the French, from the Latin *lingua*, the *tongue*, a name very commonly applied to speech, because the tongue, from its relative bulk, its flexibility, and the greater power of the voluntary muscles over it, is the most conspicuous, if not the most important, organ concerned in the production of articulate sounds. The Anglo-Saxons had several words for language, as *gereord*, *geþeode*, *lyden*,* *reord*,

* There is a confusion between the Saxon *lyden* (*læden* or *leden*), the Old English *leden*, and the national appellative *Latin*, a parallel to which is found also in modern Spanish. *Lyden* (*læden* or *leden*), seems to be allied to the Anglo-Saxon *hlyd*, *gehlyd*, a sound, and *hlúd*, loud, to the Danish *Lyd*, the Swedish *ljúd*, and the German *Laut* (noun), and *laut* (adjective),

spell, spæc, spræc, þeodisc, tunge. Some of these cannot be traced back to any more radical form; and we therefore cannot positively say, as we can of the corresponding words in most other tongues, that they are essentially of a figurative character. Lyden is recognizable in our modern English adjective *loud*; spæc, in *speech*; tunge, in *tongue*; Chaucer and other early writers use *leden* for language, and spell still subsists in the noun *spell*, a charm, in the verb *to spell*, and as the last member of *gospel*.*

all involving the same idea; and probably also to the Icelandic *hljóð*, a sound, a song, a trumpet; which latter word also signifies, oddly, the absence of sound, namely, *silence*. The three Saxon forms of this word are employed also for *Latin*. Either this is a confusion of meaning arising from similarity of form, or lyden is a derivative of *Latin*, as *the language par excellence*, and so not allied to the other Gothic words above cited, unless, indeed, we suppose Latin itself to be derived from a root meaning an articulate sound, or language. In Spanish, especially in the Spanish colonies, an African or Indian who has learned Spanish, and acquired enough of the arts of civilization to make him useful as a servant, is called *ladino*, and Old Castilian was sometimes styled *Ladino*. On the other hand, *Latin* was used in Catalan to signify a foreign language generally. Thus in B. D'Esclot, cap. xxxv.: "vench denant lo rey, e agenollas a ell, e saludal en son lati," and cap. xxxviii.: "e cridaren molt fortament en llur lati;" "en son lati," and "en llur lati," signifying respectively, in his language, in their language, which in this case was Arabic. Latin was also very commonly employed in the same sense in old French and Italian. From this use of the word, *my ladino* came to mean, in Spanish, a great linguist, one knowing many foreign languages. The Old English *latiner*, by corruption *latimer*, an interpreter or dragoman, is of similar derivation. Thus in Richard Cœur de Lion, Weber ii. 97:

Anon stood up her *latimer*
And aunsweryd Aleyn Trenchemer.

* It is not clear whether the first syllable of this word is the name of the divinity, God, or the adjective *gód*, *good*. Bosworth (under *God*) and many other etymologists, adopt the former supposition; and this view is supported by the analogy of the Icelandic, which has *guospjáll*, *God's word*. On the other hand *god-spell*, as a compound of the adjective *gód* and *spell* would be the exact etymological equivalent of the Greek *εὐαγγέλιον*, and the author of the *Ormulum*, who lived at a period when Anglo-Saxon was not yet forgotten, evidently adopts this derivation.

Goddspell onn Enngliss nemnedeð iss
God word, andd god tîpennde,
God errnde, &c. Ormulum, Preface, 167.

And again,

Off all þiss god uss bringgeþ word
Andd errnde andd god tîpinnde

The word *language*, in its most limited application, is restricted to human articulate speech; but in its metaphorical use, it embraces every mode of communication by which facts can be made known, sentiments or passions expressed, or emotions excited. We speak not only of the audible language of words, the visible language of written alphabetic characters or other conventional symbols whether arbitrary or imitative, of the dumb and indefinable language of manual signs, of facial expression and of gesture, but also of the language of brute-beast and bird; and we apply the same designation to the promptings of the silent inspiration, and to the lessons of the intelligible providence, of the Deity, as well as to the voice of the many-tongued operations of inanimate nature. Language, therefore, in its broadest sense, addresses itself to the human soul both by direct intuition and through all the material entrances of knowledge. Every organ may be its vehicle, every sense its recipient, and every form of existence a speaker.

Many men pass through life without pausing to inquire whether the power of speech, of which they make hourly use, is a faculty, or an art—a gift of the Creator, or a painfully-acquired accomplishment—a natural and universal possession, or a human invention for carrying on the intercommunication essential to social life.* We may answer this query, in a general way, by

Goddspell, and forrþi magg itt well
 God errnde ben gehatenn, &c., &c.

Ormulum, Preface, 175.

Layamon, iii. 182, v. 29608, has

& beode þer godes godd-spel;

and preach there *God's gospel*, a phrase not likely to be employed if gospel had been understood to mean, of itself, God's word.

The phrases, godspell that guoda, the *good* gospel, Heliand, 1, 17, and spel godes, the word of God, H. 17, 18, 41, 15, 19 and 81, 8, seem to show that in the Continental Old-Saxon, god-spell was derived from god, God, and spell. Schilter adopts the same etymology for the gotspellon of Tatian; gotspellota themo folke, evangelizabat populo, c. xiii. 25; zi gotspellone Gotes rihhi, evangelizare regnum Dei, c. xxii. 4, as also for gotspel, predigonti gotspel rihhes, prædicans evangelium regni, xxii. Godes spelboda, *Cynewulf, Crist.*, p. 886. Skeat, in his *Etymological Dictionary* (Oxford, 1882), considers the question as settled in favor of the derivation from god, God, and spell, story.

* A similar question has been raised with regard to the cries of animals, which, for certain purposes at least, perform the office of speech. About the

saying that articulate language is the product of a faculty inherent in man, though we cannot often detect any natural and necessary connection between a particular object and the vocal sound by which this or that people represents it. There can be little doubt that a colony of children, reared without hearing words uttered by those around them, would at length form for themselves a speech. What its character would be could only be de-

beginning of this century, Daines Barrington, a member of the Royal Society, tried a series of experiments to determine how far the notes of birds were spontaneous and uniform, and how far dependent on instruction and imitation. The result (which, however, has been questioned by later observers), was that though there is much difference in flexibility, power, and compass of voice in birds of different species, yet, in general, the note of the bird is that which he is taught in the nest, and with more or less felicity of imitation he adopts the song of his nurse, whether the maternal bird or a stranger. To what extent the notes of birds, of beasts, of insects, and of fish (for, in spite of the proverb, all fishes are not dumb), are significant, it is quite out of our power to determine. Coleridge, tenaciously as he adheres to the essential distinction in kind between the faculties of the brute and the man, admits that the *dog* may have an *analogon* of words. (Aids, Aph. ix.)

All will agree in denying to the lower animals the possession of language as a means of intellectual discourse; but even this conclusion must rest upon stronger grounds than the testimony of the ear. Sounds, which to our obtuse organs appear identical, may be infinitely diversified to the acuter senses of these inferior creatures, and there is abundant evidence that they do in many instances communicate with each other by means, and in a degree, wholly inappreciable by us. When a whale is struck, the whole shoal, though widely dispersed, are instantly made aware of the presence of an enemy; and when the gravedigger beetle finds the carcass of a mole, he hastens to communicate the discovery to his fellows, and soon returns with his four confederates. (Conscience, Boek der Natuer, vi.)

An English friend reports to me an instance where the lawn of a gentleman near London was so infested with ants that he had resolved to replace the whole surface with fresh turf, when early one morning a cloud of birds, many hundreds in number, of *different species*, which must have been collected from a considerable extent of territory, swooped down upon the lawn, tore open the ant-hills which nearly covered it, and devoured every ant and every egg of the whole colony. Had these birds communicated with each other and appointed a rendezvous where they could make themselves so signally useful?

The distinction we habitually make between articulate and inarticulate sounds, though sufficiently warranted as applied to human utterance, may be unfounded with reference to voices addressed to organizations less gross; and a wider acquaintance with human language often teaches us that what to the ear is, at first, a confused and inexpressive muttering, becomes, by some familiarity, an intelligible succession of significant sounds.

terminated by the method of Psammetichus, an experiment too cruel to be repeated by inquirers intelligent enough to be interested in the result. It is not improbable that a language of manual signs would precede articulate words, and it may be presumed that these signs would closely resemble those so much used as a means of communication among savages, and which are, to a great extent, identical with what have been called the natural signs of the deaf-and-dumb. If you bring together two uneducated but intelligent deaf-mutes from different countries, they will at once comprehend most of each other's signs, and converse with freedom, while their respective speaking countrymen would be wholly unable to communicate at all. And it is often observed at deaf-and-dumb asylums, when visited by natives of Polynesia, or by American Indians,* that the pupils and the strangers very readily understand each other, nature suggesting the same symbols to both. Thus, the savage and the deaf-mute

* The universality of this sign-language was beautifully illustrated at the *Institution for the Deaf-and-Dumb*, in New York, some time since, on the occasion of a visit made to it by a delegation of Sioux Indians. The Indians having been on a visit to their "Great Father" at Washington, and being on a sight-seeing tour through the country, paid a visit to the Deaf-and-Dumb Institute. "Some of the pupils were brought into the presence of the Indians, who sat stiff and upright on the benches, with their blankets wrapped around them, and all their paint on. One bright little boy was called upon to address them in the sign-language, which he did in a graceful and pointed manner. The Chief among the Indians remarked to his interpreter that he understood some of the signs. This being communicated to the principal, he had the boy illustrate by signs the manner in which hunters killed deer. This pleased the Indian Chief mightily, and he requested permission to explain the Indian's method of killing buffalo. This being granted, he sprang to his feet, threw aside his blanket, and in a wild and graceful manner, detailed, by means of signs common among the prairie tribes, a buffalo hunt—he pictured the mounting of steeds, the gallop across the prairie, the first view of the herd of buffalo, the chase, the scattering of the herd, the rapid firing of the Indians, the wounding of some buffaloes, the killing of others, concluding with the final scenes of the butchering of the animals, the taking-off of the hide, the packing of the meat on the horses, and the return to camp. The mute boy followed him eagerly through all his wild gesticulations, and when he had concluded, turned to his slate and wrote down the entire story told by the Chief. This being interpreted to the Chief, he burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, a most unusual thing for an Indian to do, and patting the lad patronizingly on the head, devoted himself during the rest of his visit to cultivating his further acquaintance."

alike express the notion of parity in general, and especially the fraternal relation, by joining and extending the two fore-fingers. The all-observing Shakespeare must have remembered this, when he made Fluellen say, "As like as my fingers is to my fingers."* In this instance, as also when the savage and the deaf-mute both express the speaking of truth by passing the extended index finger directly forwards from the lips, and the utterance of falsehood by carrying it crookedly sidewise, there seems to be some natural analogy between the gesture and the thought. So the coincidence, by which they agree in moving the hand with a rapid circular or spiral motion over the top of the head to indicate a fool, though less familiar, is equally explicable; but there are signs common to the savage and the deaf-mute, or at least mutually intelligible to them, which are apparently arbitrary, and without any discoverable relation to the thing signified.

Trained as we are to a grave and unimpassioned manner, it is difficult for us to realize that the movements and gestures with which Italian vivacity accompanies its social intercourse are all really significant. But, though in the cultivated circles of Italy, and of other countries of Southern Europe, manual signs are less resorted to, yet telegraphic communications by hands, face, feet, the whole person in short, are everywhere kept up as qualifications of animated oral discourse. A foreigner, therefore, who understands no language but that addressed to the ear, loses much

* I remember that when I told a Turcoman, in reply to a question whether I was an Englishman, that I was an American, he expressed his notion of the identity of the two peoples by the same sign.

"Your religion and ours are like *that*," and he laid the two fore-fingers of his hands one against the other.—*Huc.*, vol. ii., chap. i., p. 89.

Dampier, *Voyages*, 1708, i. 359, says: "They (the people of Mindanao) would always be praising the English, as declaring that the English and the Mindanaians were all one. This they express by *putting their two fore-fingers close together*, and saying that the English and Mindanaians were *samo, samo*, that is all one."

In the curious *Livre des Faits* de Jean Bouciquaut, P. I. c. xxv., it is stated that when the French knights were taken prisoners by the Turks at the battle of Nicopolis, the Count de Nevers saved Boucicaud from execution by claiming him as a brother, or near friend, by the same sign: "Si l'advise Dieu tout soubdainement de *joindre les deux doigts ensemble de ses deux mains* en regardant le Basat, et fit signe qu'il luy estoit comme son propre frere et qu'il le repitast; lequel signe le Basat entendit tantôt, et le fit laisser."

of the point of the lively conversation around him. Among the lower classes in the Mediterranean countries, the use of signs, with or without words, is very general. If you ask an Italian servant, who has returned empty-handed from the Post-Office, whether he has letters for you, he will reply by moving his up-lifted fore-finger slowly backwards and forwards before his nose ; while a Greek, under similar circumstances, would throw back the head, elongate the face, roll up the eyes, and give a cluck with the tongue not unlike the note of a setting hen. You see the coachmen, servants, and others of the lower classes in Italy, constantly communicating by signs, sometimes, indeed, throwing in a word, but often expressing a whole sentence in a silent gesture ; and in conversation, especially on subjects where caution is necessary, a speaker will often stop in the middle of a period and finish his remarks in dumb pantomime. Native scholars have shown that the modern Italian sign-language is very closely analogous to the ancient which is so often alluded to by the classical writers, and its origin dates back very far into the night of time. In an artistic point of view a knowledge of these signs is of considerable interest, for it serves to interpret much of the action in the pictorial compositions of Italian masters which would be otherwise hardly intelligible.* Besides articulate sounds and the

* The language of gesture is so well understood in Italy, that when King Ferdinand returned to Naples after the revolutionary movements of 1822, he made an address to the lazzaroni from the balcony of the palace, wholly by signs, which, in the midst of the most tumultuous shouts, were perfectly intelligible to his public. He reproached, threatened, admonished, forgave, and finally dismissed the rabble as thoroughly persuaded and edified by the gesticulations of the royal Punch, as an American crowd by the eloquence of a Webster. The system of *semiology*, if I may coin a word for the occasion, is even more perfected in Sicily, and it is traditionally affirmed that the famous conspiracy of the Sicilian Vespers was organized wholly by *facial* signs, not even the hand being employed. The general use of signs in Italy has grown, in a great measure, out of the fact that their swift expressiveness is often better suited to the rapid communication required by an impassioned people than the slow movement of articulate phrase. But there is another reason for the employment of a sign-language in the States of the Church, in Naples, and other despotic countries. Every man knows that he is constantly surrounded by spies, and it is therefore safer to express himself by gestures, whose application is unintelligible to a listener not already acquainted with the subject to which they refer, and which, besides, cannot be so readily recorded or repeated even when understood.

language of signs, we have another means by which we often involuntarily and unconsciously communicate, or rather betray, if not facts, at least the state of our own minds, our thoughts and feelings prompted by known or supposed facts. I refer here to the spontaneous action of the muscles of the face, and sometimes of the whole frame, when we are excited by powerful emotions, or are specially interested in the topic of a conversation which we hear or participate in. That much practice may enable any one to control, in a great degree, this involuntary expression, is undoubtedly true; but an acute observer of the human face can, in very many cases, read what is passing in the breast of another, in spite of the most strenuous efforts to conceal it. So much more truth-telling than words, in fact, are these self-speaking muscles to those who have studied their dialect, that it is a current adage that language was given us to enable us to conceal our thoughts.

There is a familiar class of words called *imitative*, or, to use a hard term, *onomatopoeic*, where there is an evident connection between the sound and the sense. These are all, or nearly all, words descriptive of particular sounds, or acts accompanied by characteristic sounds, such as buzz, crash, gurgle, gargle, hum, whiz, coo, howl, bellow, roar, whistle, whine, creak, cluck, gabble; and, in conversation, we often allow ourselves to use words of this class not to be found in the fullest dictionaries. Euren, in his Finnish Grammar, states that one-third of the verbs in Finnish are distinctly onomatopoeic. The remark of a contemporary of Dr. Johnson, that much of the effect of his conversation was owing to his "*bow-wow* way," will be remembered by every one. A great modern English poet, following the authority of Sidney, has even introduced into verse a word borrowed from the voice of the sheep, when, speaking of certain censurable follies, he calls them "*baaing* vanities." That these resemblances are in many instances imaginary, appears from the fact that different nations sometimes express the same sound by different imitative words. Thus, we represent the report of fire-arms by the word *bang!* the Germans by *puff*, or *paff!*; and Sylvester, in his translation of Du Bartas published two centuries and a half since, uses *pork*, *pork*, instead of the modern *caw*, *caw*, as an imitation of the note of the raven.*

* The French imitate the sound of a bell by *drolin! drolin!* The Italians

There has been much ingenious and plausible speculation upon the natural significance of articulate words; and it is at least established, that certain elementary sounds are very extensively, if not universally, employed to express certain primary conceptions. The subject has not, however, yet been prosecuted far enough to bring us to very precise results; but we are probably authorized to say that, as a general law, there does exist, or has existed, a natural connection between the sound and the thing signified, and consequently, that the forms of language are neither arbitrary or conventional on the one hand, nor accidental on the other, but are natural and necessary products of the organization, faculties, and condition of man. Nay, some philologists maintain that the laws of the germination and growth of these forms are so constant, that if the structure and powers of the organs of speech, and all modifying outward conditions affecting the internal or external life of a particular race, could be precisely known, their entire language might be predicted and constructed beforehand, with as much certainty as any other result of the action of human faculties. Hence it would follow that a resemblance between particular radicals or grammatical forms in different languages does not prove that one is derived from the other, or that both are historically referable to any one original source; but the likeness may be simply an instance of a similarity of effect from the operation of similar causes. It would therefore be conceivable that words identical in form, yet absolutely new, might even now spring up simultaneously or successively in nations between which there is

use *squilla* as imitative of the sound of a *trumpet* and of a *bell*. Columbus found that the Indians called a hand-bell *chuc*, and *ciócc* (evidently identical with *Glocke* and *clock*) is the Piedmontese for *bell*.

A passage, cited by Suidas from Cratinus, imitating the bleating of sheep, has been appealed to as a proof that the pronunciation of the modern Greeks is erroneous, because according to their orthoepy the syllables in question would be sounded not *ba*, *ba*, but *œ*, *œ*. On the other hand, it might be observed, that perhaps the Grecian sheep in the time of Cratinus were of breeds whose bleat was as distinct from that of the modern European stock, as the croaking of what Tassoni calls the "syrens of the ditch," in Western Europe, is from that of their aquatic brethren of Athens, whose song, as every observing traveller in Greece can testify, the *βρεκεκεκέξ κοῦξ κοῦξ* of the Aristophanic comedy so well represents. Bruno Latini, *Li Treccors*, p. 229, observes that the bleat of the black sheep is *meh!* that of the white, *beh!*

Ruskin somewhere uses *ringing streamlets* as imitative.

no communication, and no connection but that which is implied in unity of species and of organization. When, then, we find in the language of the Tonga Islands the verb *m a t é*, *to kill*, we are not authorized to infer an affinity between that speech and the Spanish, which uses *m a t a r* in the same sense, or the Latin which has *m a c t a r e*, also of the like signification. We must either refer such cases to some obscure law of universal humanity, or agree with Thomas Fuller, who remarks that

“The judicious behold these as no regular congruities, but casual coincidences, the like to which may be found in languages of the greatest distance, which never met together since they parted at the confusion of Babel; and we may not enforce a conformity between the Hebrew and the English because one of the three giants, sons of Anak, was called *A-hi-man.*”

The origin of language is shrouded in the same impenetrable mystery that conceals the secrets of our primary mental and physical being. We cannot say, with some, that it is of itself an organism, but we regard it as a necessary, and therefore natural, product of intelligent self-conscious organization. Yet we do not believe that the rage of the naturalistic school of philosophy for detecting law and principle where our limited human faculties must be content to accept ultimate fact, will ever succeed in pointing out the *quo modo*, the *how*, of its germination and early development.* We know no language in a state of formation. So far as observation goes, its structure is as complete among the most unlettered savages, and in the remotest periods, as in the golden age of Hellenic literature. The history of its changes we can but imperfectly trace; the law of its being lies beyond our reach. Its contemporary mutations, even, elude us, and to most of our inquiries into the rationale of its forms we find no more satisfactory answer than that one given by the quaint author of the *Religio Medici*, in the seventh of his *Miscellany Tracts*,

* I cannot help referring here to Max Müller's "*Hübner Lectures*," delivered in 1878, as a remarkable instance of the unsatisfactory character of speculations on this subject, coming as they do from a philologist and linguist so eminent that his suggestions must always command the most respectful attention, even when they do not compel assent.

See American ed. under title of *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion*, p. 177 et seq.

Why saith the Italian, Signor, si! the Spaniard, Si Señor!
Because the one puts that behind, the other puts before.

But though the faculty of articulate speech may be considered natural to man, it differs from most other human powers, whether organic or incorporeal, in this: that it is a faculty belonging to the race, not to the individual, and that the social condition is essential, not to its cultivation only, but to its existence. Hence, its exercise is not spontaneous, or in any sense self-taught, as are all purely organic processes. Nevertheless, considered in its mode of action, the use of the mother-tongue may be regarded as an instinctive function, because it is acquired through the promptings of natural impulses, and without any conscious, calculating effort. We retain no recollection of the process by which we learned to understand and employ our maternal speech, at least as respects that portion of it which is mastered in infant life, and is not taught in the artificial form it assumes in books. In actual speaking, the movement, both physical and intellectual, is as completely automatic and unconscious as the action of the nerves, muscles, and tendons by whose instrumentality the hand is raised or the foot thrown forward. We *will* the result, and it follows mechanically in both cases, so far as any conscious operation of our volition upon the material agencies is concerned. It is, therefore, no abuse of words to call the mother-tongue, as the unlearned often do, our *natural* language.

Speech, fully possessed and absolutely appropriated, is purely subjective; but it becomes inorganic and foreign when we make it matter of objective study, observation, or conscious effort. Learning a foreign language, or even studiously conforming our own to abstract rule, is analogous to those half-intellectual, half-corporeal processes, by which we acquire the power of controlling the action of the involuntary muscles, so as to give movement to parts of the system ordinarily quiescent; and speech, like bodily motion, is seldom graceful or free, except while its action is spontaneous. The moment it betrays itself as artificial, it becomes constrained, awkward, inelegant. And hence it is that the mother-tongue, though it may be forgotten, can never be completely supplanted or supplied by any other. Those who grow up speaking many languages, very seldom acquire a complete mastery

over any of them. They are linguistic orphans, without a maternal speech, and they use language not as an organ, but as an implement.*

The origin of the appellative *English*, as the exclusive designation of a tongue employed by the Saxon as well as the Anglian colonists of our fatherland, is not altogether clear. The etymology of the national names of both the principal immigrant races is very uncertain, but it is familiarly known, that for several centuries after, and not improbably before, the commencement of the Christian era, bands of warlike adventurers from the conterminous borders of what are now the Kingdom of Denmark and the German States, made frequent incursions into Britain, and at last established themselves as its masters. The native Celtic inhabitants, who were compelled to retire before the martial prowess of the strangers, do not seem to have distinguished very accurately between the different nationalities of their conquerors. A common name was applied by the Britons to the whole alien immigration; and, though each tribe had its own domestic designation, they were, and still are, all called Saxons by the Celtic aborigines and their descendants.

* It is wonderful to what extent purely conventional articulate symbols may be made to supply the place of a more natural language, and to serve as a means of very varied communication. In most of these cases, the signs agreed upon must be considered as standing for words, not ideas, and they are rather an index to speech than a language of themselves. Take the exhibitions often witnessed, where, when you show an object to one in the secret, a confederate, blindfolded or in an adjoining room, will instantly name it. A method of communication in such cases is this. The parties agree to designate certain words of frequent occurrence, chiefly names of familiar objects, by numerals, and the table of words and their corresponding numbers is committed to memory by both. The simple digits up to nine, including also the cipher, will represent words which may, without exciting suspicion, be used in asking the name of the object. Let us suppose 1 to stand for *what*, 2 for *is*, and 8 for *this*; and further, that the number corresponding to *pen-knife* is 123. The performer, when a spectator produces a pen-knife, asks, What is this? The confederate combines the corresponding numerals, one, two, three, into the number 123, the answer to which is *pen-knife*. Or again, 4, 5, and 6 may stand respectively for *tell*, *me*, and *now*, and the number 645 for *pencil*. A pencil is held up by a spectator, the conjuror cries, Now, tell me! and the answer 6, 4, 5—645, a *pencil*, is at once given. I have known this numeral vocabulary carried up to four thousand words, and the principle is capable of almost unlimited variation and extension.

Popular narrative has fixed the most important of these expeditions at about the middle of the fifth century, and it is said to have been composed chiefly of Jutes, or Jutlanders, under the leadership of Hengist and Horsa,* who were afterwards joined by successive reinforcements from the Gothic tribes on the coast of the German Ocean. Among these are particularly named, first, the Saxon conquerors, who, at different periods, and under different leaders, subdued and colonized Sussex, Wessex, Essex, and Middlesex; and secondly, two considerable bodies of Angles from Sleswick, who occupied Suffolk and Norfolk, and the south-western districts of Scotland. These tribes, together with Frisians and emigrants from other neighboring Scandinavian and Teutonic countries, soon amalgamated, and gradually extended their joint sway over the whole island, except the more inaccessible provinces of Northern and Western Britain.

Such are the traditional accounts of the Anglo-Saxon conquest, as detailed by the Saxon Chronicle and other native annals, and they have been received without suspicion or inquiry by most succeeding historians. But the evidence on which these supposed facts rest, is of too doubtful character to command by any means implicit belief. The real history of this period is wrapped in the darkest obscurity, and we can hardly say that any thing is certain beyond the simple fact, that, before the close of the sixth century after Christ, the most important portion of Great Britain had been subdued, and was possessed, by Gothic tribes known to the indigenous populations as *Saxons*. There is no *historical* proof by which we can identify the Anglo-Saxon language and the people who spoke it, with any Continental dialect and nation; nor,

* The names of the two brothers, Hengist and Horsa, who are said to have headed the most eventful incursion of the invaders, are words in one or another form common to all the Scandinavian and the Teutonic dialects. Both are names of the genus *horse*, but in most localities *hengst* is appropriated to the male, while in some, and particularly in Schleswig, *horsa* or *hors* is confined to the female animal. J. G. Kohl informs us that both the proper names are still current in the district from which the ancient conquerors are reported to have emigrated. A Danish colonel told the traveller that in a company of his regiment there were two privates bearing these names; and it happened, oddly, that in this case Hengist and Horsa, like Castor and Pollux, were still inseparably united, the places of the two soldiers being side by side in the ranks. Inseln u. Marschen Schlesw.-Holst. i., 290.

on the other hand, by which we can establish a diversity of origin or of speech between the Anglian and the Saxon colonists of Great Britain. But there is *linguistic* evidence of a great commingling of nations in the body of intruders. The Anglo-Saxon, in its obscure etymology, its confused and imperfect inflections, and its anomalous and irregular syntax, appears to me to furnish abundant proof of a diversity, not of a unity, of origin. It has not what is considered the distinctive character of a *modern*, so much as of a mixed and ill-assimilated, speech, and its relations to the various ingredients of which it is composed are just those of the present English to its own heterogeneous sources. It borrowed roots, and dropped endings, appropriated syntactical combinations without the inflections which made them logical, and had not yet acquired a consistent and harmonious structure when the Norman conquest arrested its development, and imposed upon it, or, perhaps we should say, gave a new stimulus to, the tendencies which have resulted in the formation of modern English. There is no proof that Anglo-Saxon was ever spoken anywhere but on the soil of Great Britain; for the Heliand, and other remains of *old* Saxon, are not *Anglo*-Saxon, and I think it must be regarded, not as a language which the colonists, or any of them, brought with them from the Continent, but as a new speech resulting from the fusion of many separate elements. It is, therefore, indigenous, if not aboriginal, and as exclusively local and national in its character as English itself.*

But independently of such internal evidence, it is very improbable that—at a period when there existed little political, or, so far as we have reason to believe, linguistic unity in any considerable extent of maritime territory occupied by the Gothic race—any one branch, or any one dialect, of that race could have supplied a sufficient number of emigrants for so extensive conquest and occupation. The dialects of the islands and south-eastern coasts of the North Sea, are at this day extremely numerous and discordant,†

* See Lecture vi.

† The dialects referred to in the text are generally grouped under the common denomination of Frisic or Frisian, but they vary so much both in structure and vocabulary, that, in many instances, they cannot be considered as having much direct relationship with each other. In no part of Europe are there so many speeches, within the same area, which are mutually unintelligible to those

the population very mixed and diversified in blood; and there is no reason to suppose that there was less diversity of language or of origin among the inhabitants of those shores, at the rude and remote period of the conquest of Britain. To determine, therefore, the relative share of different tribes and different dialects in the formation of the Anglo-Saxon people and the Anglo-Saxon speech, would be a hopeless and an unprofitable task; but we may safely adopt the general conclusion, that in both the Teutonic element predominated over the Scandinavian.*

who employ dialects held to be cognate. At least five principal varieties or patois are recognized in modern Frisic, and each of these is subdivided into several local jargons. A Frisic literature can scarcely be said to exist, for neither the ancient legal codes, nor the few modern rhymes, constitute a body of writings sufficiently various and comprehensive to be dignified with such an appellation. Accidences and partial vocabularies of several Frisic dialects have been compiled, but as, notwithstanding these and occasional dilettantisms in the way of verse, written Frisic is never employed for any practical purpose, the language has no orthography, and is, philologically speaking, an unwritten tongue. It is therefore subject to all the uncertainty and vacillation of other languages which exist only in the mouth of the people; nor is there any satisfactory evidence to show that it was ever much more consistent and homogeneous, as an independent speech, than it is at this hour. The data are too insufficient in amount, and too vague and uncritical in character, to serve as a basis for speculation upon the relations between Frisic, as a whole, and other tongues; and we might almost as well build arguments concerning the grammatical system of the Latin upon the modern patois of Normandy, Gascony, and Provence; or construct a theory of the Anglo-Saxon inflections and syntax from a comparison of Tim Bobbin's dialogues, the mercantile jargon of Canton, and the Talkee-talkie of the negroes of Surinam. See Lecture xviii.

* German and Germanizing philologists appear to me to make the Frisic dialects too exclusively Teutonic. Take for example the argument from the frequent termination of the names of places in *um*, as *Husum* and others, which is said to be in all cases a contraction of *heim*. Now there are, in unequivocally Scandinavian districts, local names ending in *um*, which in these instances are taken from the dative plural of the original appellation of the locality. Thus, in Old-Northern, *Upsal* was a plural, *Uppsälir*; at or in *Upsal*, á or í *Uppsöllum*. In speaking of towns, we use in English most frequently the objective with the prepositions *at* or *in*, and in like manner in Old-Northern, the dative, as á or í, *Húsúm*, would occur oftener than any other *case* of the name of that town. When the inflections were dying out, as, in the confused mixture of races in Schleswig-Holstein and its borders, they did very early, the case oftenest in use would survive all others, and become the indeclinable name of the town, just as, in Danish and English, *Holum* is the only form for all the cases of the Icelandic *Holar*, the name of a place in northern Iceland, remarkable as having long possessed the only printing-

There is, moreover, pretty satisfactory evidence that Angles formed some portion at least of the new population, and though we have no reliable direct proof of the immigration to Britain of any tribe that had called itself Saxon while resident on Germanic soil, yet, apart from tradition, we are authorized to infer such an immigration from the local names Sussex, Essex, Wessex, and Middlesex, (South Saxons, West Saxons, East Saxons, and Middle Saxons;) from the fact that all the intruders alike were named Saxons by the native Celts; and from the further circumstance, that after the language was reduced to writing, it was called by those who spoke it *Saxon* as well as *English*.*

press in the island. In the case of Húsúm, the dative plural, which would mean *at the houses*, or *at the village*, is a much more probable etymology than Húshjem, (Haus-heim,) which would be pleonastic. These instances in the modern Scandinavian dialects are precisely analogous to the formation of Stanchio from *ép τὰν Κῶ*, and other similar names in modern Greek, the accusative in that language supplying the place of the dative which is obsolete.

In Old-Northern it was very common to use the dative in naming a place, in constructions where the idiom of other languages would require the nominative. Thus, instead of saying, 'that estate was called Steinn,' it was more usual to employ the dative; *sá bærhæt á Steini*, that estate was called, *at Steinn*. So, þar er heitir í *Rípum*, at a place called *in Rípar*. In *Vatnshala Saga*, k. 16, we have, *á Hrutastöðum* hét þat er Hrutí bió, it was called *at Hrutastöðar*, where Hrutí lived; in the *Saga of Finnbogi hinn rami*, k. 8, hann bió þar sem heitir *at Toptum*, he lived where it is called *at Toptar*; in *Magnúsar goða Saga*, k. 52, bjó * * þar sem *á Stokkum* heitir, maðr * * er hét *pránder*, there lived, where it is called *at Stokkar*, a man who hight Thrend. Athelstan to Wulfgar—quondam telluris particulam in loco quem solicole *at Hamme* vocitant. Kemble, *Cod. dip.*æv. Sax. No. 353. Haupt, vol. 12, p. 82.

Alf. Orosius, Klipstein, Vol. I., p. 220, he gefóre of *Act-Hathum*

" Thorpe, p. 252, he gefóre of *Hadum*.

So above, Orosius, Klipstein, to *Act-Hathum*.

Thorpe, to *Hadum*.

Ten Doornkaat Koolman, *Wörterbuch der Ost Friesischen Sprache*, now in course of publication, which, though in a scientific point of view it does not come up to the highest standard of German Linguistics, is nevertheless a very valuable contribution to the history of the Netherlandish dialects, makes much of the foregoing note inapplicable or superfluous.

* Some years ago there appeared in the periodical, *The New-Englander*, published at New Haven, to which I cannot give a more precise reference, a learned article on the question discussed in the text, and the first number of *Anglia*, a German periodical, has an able essay by Grein on the same subject. I refer the reader to both, and, as evidence of early Continental use of *Anglo-*

How then did *England* become the exclusive appellation of the country, *English* of the language? We have no evidence whatever of the application of any general or collective name to the people, the country, or the speech, before the introduction of Christianity into England. The new inhabitants of the island became first known to the Roman see through Anglian captives who were carried to Rome in the sixth century. The name of their tribe, in its Latinized form, *Angli*, we may suppose was bestowed by the Romans upon the whole people, and the derivative, *Anglia*, upon the territory it occupied. The Christian missionaries who commenced the conversion of Britain would naturally continue to employ the name by which the island had become known anew to them; and their converts, especially if no general name had been already adopted, would assume that which their teachers brought with them. This, in the absence of any satisfactory proof that the Angles were a particularly numerous or powerful element in the population, appears the most probable reason that can now be assigned, why a people, who, in large proportion, retained for themselves and their several provinces the appellation of *Saxon*, and who were known to neighboring nations by no other name, should have surrendered this hereditary designation, and given to their language the name of *English*, to their country that of *England*, or the land of the Angles.

The language itself, in the earliest existing remains of the native literature whether composed in Latin or in the vernacular, is generally called English, but sometimes Saxon. These remains are all of later date than the adoption of Christianity by the English people, and, of course, however prevalent the use of *English* as a national appellative may be in them, nothing can be thence inferred as to the extent to which the term was applied at earlier periods. The compound term, Anglo-Saxon, first occurs in the life of Alfred, ascribed to his contemporary, Asser, who calls that prince *Angul-Saxonum Rex*, king of the

Saxon as a designation of the English people and their speech, I cite Warnfrid (8th century), *De Gestis Langobardorum*, Lib. v. cap. 87, also, Lib. vi. cap. 15; Widukind (10th century), § 9, p. 8. See Bede.

Anglo-Saxons. The employment of the word as a designation of the language and literature is much more recent.*

The Anglo-Saxon language, though somewhat modified by Scandinavian influence, differs too widely from the Old-Northern or Icelandic, (which I use as synonymous terms,) to afford any countenance to the supposition that either of them is derived from the other. Nor is there any good reason for rejecting the term *Anglo-Saxon*, and, as has been proposed, employing *English* as the name of the language from the earliest date to the present day. A change of nomenclature like this would expose us to the inconvenience, not merely of embracing within one designation objects which have been conventionally separated, but of confounding things logically distinct; for though our modern English is built upon and mainly derived from the Anglo-Saxon, the two dialects are now so discrepant, that the fullest knowledge of one would not alone suffice to render the other intelligible to either the eye or the ear. They are too unlike in vocabulary and in inflectional character to be still considered as one speech, though in syntactical structure they resemble each other more closely than almost any other pair of related ancient and modern tongues. But even in this respect, the accordance is not so strict as some writers conceive it to be. Sir Thomas Browne, for instance, in the eighth of his *Miscellany Tracts*, has, by a compendious process, established very nearly an absolute identity between the two. Taking, or, more probably, composing a page or two of English, from which all words of Latin or French origin are excluded, he has turned, or, to use a Germanism here not inappropriate, *overset* it into Anglo-Saxon, by looking out the corresponding terms in a Saxon Dictionary, and arranging them word for word as in English, with scarcely any

* The pretended formal imposition of the name of England upon the Anglo-Saxon possessions in Great Britain, by a decree of King Egbert, is unsupported by any contemporaneous or credible testimony. It is rejected as fabulous by most historical investigators, and it is certainly very improbable that a king, himself a Saxon by birth and name, ruling Saxon subjects and Saxon provinces, should have voluntarily chosen for his realm a designation borrowed from another people and another territory. The title of *Angliæ* or *Anglorum rex* is much more naturally explained by the supposition that *England* and *English* had been already adopted as the *collective* names of the country and its inhabitants.

attention to grammatical form, and has thus manufactured a dialect bearing no greater relation to Anglo-Saxon than do the macaronic compositions of the sixteenth century to classical Latin.

In the want of more extensive means than the press has yet made accessible for the study of the dialects of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—the transition period—we cannot assign any precise date to the change from Anglo-Saxon to English; nor, indeed, is there any reason to suppose that any such sudden revolution occurred in the Anglican speech as to render it hereafter possible to make any thing more than an approximative and somewhat arbitrary determination of the period. For the purposes of an introductory course no nice distinctions on this point are necessary, and it will suffice to say that the dialect of the period between the middle of the twelfth and the middle of the thirteenth centuries partakes so strongly of the characteristics of both Anglo-Saxon and English, that it has been usually, and not inappropriately, called Semi-Saxon.

It is a matter of still greater difficulty to refer the subsequent history of English to fixed chronological epochs. The name *Old-English* has been applied to the language as spoken from the latter date to the end of the reign of Edward III. in 1377; that of *Middle-English* to the form of speech extending from the close of Edward's reign to the death of Queen Elizabeth in 1603, while all its subsequent phases are embraced under the common designation of *Modern-English*. This is, in many respects, an objectionable division of our philological history. The Old-English era would include many of the works of Chaucer, which belong properly to a later stage of our literature, and at the same time exclude the English Bible of Wycliffe and his fellow-laborers, whose style is more archaic than that of Chaucer. Middle-English would embrace the *Confessio Amantis* of Gower, who, philologically, is older than Chaucer, and the entire works of Hooker, as well as many of the plays of Shakespeare, both of whom belong unequivocally to the Modern-English period. It would, I think, be more accurate to commence the second era about the year 1350, and to terminate it with the third quarter of the sixteenth century.

The first marked and specific change in the English language took place in the time and, in a very considerable degree, by the

influence of Wycliffe, Gower, and Chaucer, the period of whose lives extended through the last three quarters of the fourteenth century, and included the brilliant reign of Edward III., and the glorious history of the Black Prince. The works of Wycliffe and his school, including their translations of the Bible, which are known to have been widely circulated, undoubtedly exerted a very important influence on the prose, and especially on the spoken dialect. "The moral Gower," as Chaucer calls him, was inferior in ability to his two great contemporaries, and his literary influence less marked; but his contributions to the improvement of his native tongue are of some importance; and if it is true, as Fuller quaintly remarks, that he "left English very bad," it is also true, as Fuller further observes, that he found it "very, very bad." The great poetical merit of Chaucer, the popular character of his subjects, and his own high social position, gave him an ascendancy in the rising literature of England that scarcely any subsequent writer has attained; and there is perhaps no English author who has done more to mould, or rather to fix, the standard of the language, and to develop its poetical capabilities, than this great genius.* From this period to the introduction of printing by Caxton, and the consequent diffusion of classical literature in England about the close of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century, the language remained nearly stationary; but at that period a revolution commenced, which was promoted by the Reformation, and for a hundred years English was in a state of transition. At the close of the period to which I have proposed to apply the name Middle-English, or about the year 1575, that revolution had produced its first great and most striking effect upon the structure and vocabulary of our tongue, and thus rendered possible the composition of such writings as those of the great theologian and the great dramatist, which signalized the commencement of the last and greatest era of our literature. English now became fixed in grammar and vocabulary, so far as a thing essentially so fleeting as speech can ever be said to be fixed, and for nearly three centuries it has undergone no very important change. Our orthography has indeed become more uniform, and our stock of words has been much enlarged, but he

* See Lectures i., v., vi., and vii.

that is well read in Spenser, Hooker, and Shakespeare, not to speak of other great luminaries of that age, and above all, of the standard translation of the Bible (which, however, appropriately belongs to an earlier period), will doubt whether it has gained much in power to expand the intellect or touch the heart.*

Besides the words which express the general subject of the present course, I must here notice certain other terms of art, and apologize for an occasional looseness in the use of them, which the poverty of the English grammatical nomenclature renders almost unavoidable. Our word *language* has no conjugate adjective, and for want of a native term, English scholars have long employed the Greek derivative, *philological*, in a corresponding sense. But *philology* and its derivative adjective have acquired, in the vocabulary of Continental science, a different meaning from that which we give them, more comprehensive in one direction, more limited in another, and, to supply the want which a restriction of their earlier sense has created, *linguistic* or *linguistics*, a term Latin in its radical, Greek in its form, has been introduced. *Philology* was originally applied in Germany to the study of the classical languages and literature of Greece and Rome, as a means of general intellectual culture. In its present use, it is defined as a "historical science, whose end is the knowledge of the intellectual condition, labors, and products of a nation, or of cognate nations, at particular epochs of general chronology, with reference to the historical development of such nations." † There are, then, not one, namely a Greek and Roman, but many philologies, as many, indeed, as there are distinct peoples, or fam-

* "I take this present period of our English tung to be the verie height thereof, bycause I find it so excellently well fined both for the bodie of the tung itself, and for the customarie writing thereof, as either foren workmanship can giue it glosse, or as home-wrought hanling can giue it grace. When the age of our people which now vse the tung so well, is dead and departed, there will another succede, and with the people the tung will alter and change; which change in the full haruest thereof maie prove comparable to this, but sure for this which we now vse, it seemeth euen now to be at the best for substance, and the brauest for circumstance, and whatsoever shall become of the English state, the English tung cannot prove fairer than it is at this daie, if it maie please our learned sort so to esteeme of it, and to bestow their trauell upon such a subject."—Mulcaster, First Part of the Elementarie, p. 159. A. D. 1582.

† Heyse: Sprachwissenschaft, ff. 17.

ilies of peoples, whose intellectual characters and action may be known through their languages. In philology thus considered, the study of languages is a means to the end specified in the definition just given. In *linguistics*, on the other hand, language itself, as one of the great characteristics of humanity, is the end, and the means are the study of general and comparative grammar. Every philology is the physiology of a species in language; linguistics, the comparative anatomy of all the several systems of articulate communication between man and man. Linguistics, as a noun, has hardly become an English word. Philology, as used by most English and American writers, embraces the signification of the two words by which, in Continental literature, the study of language is characterized, according to the methods by which, and the objects for which, it is pursued. The adjectives, philological and linguistic, are employed sometimes interchangeably in the same sense as philology, and sometimes as adjectives conjugate in *meaning* to the noun language. I shall not attempt, in this course, a strict conformity to Continental usage in the employment of these words, nor, indeed, would it be practicable to do so, until a new adjective shall be coined to relieve one of them of its double meaning; but I shall endeavor so to use them all, that the context or the subject matter will determine the sense which they are intended to bear for the occasion.*

From the distinction here pointed out, it results that philology concerns itself chiefly with that which is peculiar to a given speech and its literature, linguistics with those laws and properties which are common to all languages. Philology is conversant with distinctions; linguistics with analogies. The course of lectures I am commencing is intended to be strictly philological, and I shall introduce illustrations from the field of linguistics only when they are necessary for etymological reasons, or to make the distinguishing traits of English more palpable by the force of contrast.

* Our English grammatical and philological vocabulary is poor. We have no adjective strictly conjugate to *speech, tongue, language, verb, noun*, and many other terms of art in this department. *Linguistic* is a barbarous hybrid, and, in our use, equivocal, as are also the adjectives *verbal, nominal*, and the like. A native equivalent to the *sprachlich* of some German writers, corresponding nearly to our *old* use of *philological*, as in the phrase, *sprachliche Forschungen*, where the adjective embraces the meaning both of *philological* and *linguistic*, is much wanted.

LECTURE III.

PRACTICAL USES OF ETYMOLOGY.

IN the last lecture, the distinction made in recent grammatical nomenclature between philology and linguistics was illustrated by comparing the former to the physiology of a single species, the latter to the comparative anatomy of different species. Etymology, or the study of the primitive, derivative, and figurative forms and meanings of words, must of course have different uses, according to the object for which it is pursued. If the aims of the etymological inquirer are philological, and he seeks only a more thorough comprehension and mastery of the vocabulary of his own tongue, the uses in question, though not excluding other collateral advantages, may be said to be of a strictly practical character; or, in other words, etymology, so studied, tends directly to aid us in the clear understanding and just and forcible employment of the words which compose our own language.* If, on the other hand, the scholar's objects are ethnological or linguistic, and he investigates the history of words for the purpose of tracing the relations between different races or different languages, and of arriving at those general principles of universal grammar which

* Etymological studies for this purpose do not yield equally valuable fruits in all languages. I would instance modern Greek. Very many curious and instructive facts referring to the development and growth of Mediæval and Modern Greek will be found in Sophocles's learned *Glossary of Later and Byzantine Greek*. Cambridge, Mass., 1860, quarto. See Preface to the Glossary, pp. 181-2-3; also App. to Glossary, p. 581.

We commend this work of Sophocles to the attention of English Philhellenes who, with certain distinguished British scholars, believe in the identity of Modern and Classic Greek, and who advise the acquisition of a practical mastery of the modern speech as the best means of becoming thoroughly familiar with the letter and spirit of the ancient tongue. I cannot here assign my reasons at length, but I must express my total dissent from this opinion.

determine the form and structure of all human speech, his studies are indeed more highly scientific in their scope and method, but they aid him little in the comprehension, and, as experience abundantly shows, scarcely at all in the use, of his maternal tongue. But though I admit that philology is of a less rigorously scientific character than linguistics, I by no means concede to the latter any pre-eminence as a philosophic study, or as requiring higher intellectual endowments for its successful cultivation; and it cannot be disputed that, as a means of ethical culture, philology, connecting itself as it does with the whole mental and physical life of man, illustrating as well the inward thought and feeling as the outward action of a nation, has almost as great a superiority over linguistics as has history over pure mathematics. Philological studies, when philology, as explained in the last lecture, was restricted to the cultivation of the languages, literature, history, and archæology of Greece and Rome, were very commonly called *literæ humaniores*, or, in English, the *humanities*; and it is the conviction of their value as a moral and intellectual discipline, which has led scholars almost universally to ascribe the origin of this appellation to a sense of their refining, elevating, and humanizing influence. This, however, I think, is an erroneous etymology.* They were called *literæ humaniores*, the *humanities*, by way of opposition to the *literæ divinæ*, or *divinity*, the two studies, philology and theology, then completing the circle of scholastic knowledge, which, at the period of the introduction of the phrase, scarcely included any branch of physical science. But though the etymology is mistaken, its general reception is an evidence of the opinion of the learned as to the worth and importance of the study, and, now that so many modern literatures have attained to an excellence scarcely inferior to that of classic models,

* I am not here controverting the opinion of Aulus Gellius and other ancient critics concerning the etymology and signification of the term *literæ humaniores* or *humaniores*. They were quite right as to the origin and force of the expression as understood and used by themselves and their contemporaries. But in the classic ages theological literature had, properly speaking, no existence; and when in succeeding centuries there sprang up a body of distinctly Christian literature, it became necessary to discriminate between it and the works of heathen authors, and the term *literæ divinae* was applied to theological writings, while profane compositions were called *literæ humanae* or *humaniores* with little attention to the original significance of the expression.

their special philologies have even stronger claims upon us than those of ancient lore, because they are not only almost equally valuable as instruments of mental culture, but are more directly connected with the clear intelligence and fit discharge of our highest moral, social, and religious duties.

Etymology is a fundamental branch of all philological and all linguistic study. The word is used in two senses, or rather, the science of etymology has two offices. The one concerns itself with the primitive and derivative forms and significations of words, the other with their grammatical inflections and modifications; the one considers words independently and absolutely, the other in their syntactical relations. In discussing the uses of etymology, I shall confine myself to the first of these offices, or that which consists in investigating the earliest recognizable shape and meaning of words, and in tracing the history of their subsequent changes in form and signification. A knowledge of etymology, to such an extent as is required for all the general purposes of literature and of life, is attainable by aids within the reach of every man of moderate scholastic training. Our commonest dictionaries give, with tolerable accuracy, the etymologies of most of our vocabulary, and where these fail, every library will furnish the means of further investigation. It must be confessed, however, that no English dictionary at all fulfils the requisites either of a truly scientific or of a popular etymologicon. They all attempt too much and too little—too much of comparative, too little of positive etymology. Of course, in a complete thesaurus of any language, the etymology of every word should exhibit both its philology and its linguistics, its domestic history, and its foreign relations, but in a hand-lexicon of any modern tongue, this wide range of linguistic research is misplaced, because it necessarily excludes much that is of more immediate importance to the understanding and the use of the vocabulary. Richardson's, which, however, is faulty in arrangement and too bulky for convenient use as a manual, best answers the true idea of an English dictionary, because it follows, more closely than any other, the history of the words it defines. For the purposes of general use, no foreign roots should be introduced into the etymological part of a dictionary, barely because they resemble, and are presumably cognate with, words of our own language. The selection of such

should be limited to those from which the English word is known to be derived, and such others as, by their form or their meaning, serve more clearly to explain either its orthography or some of its significations. Whatever is beyond this belongs to the domain of linguistics, comparative grammar, ethnology, to a thesaurus, not a dictionary, and it can find room in this latter only by excluding what, for the purposes of a dictionary, is of greater value.*

I have already assigned what seemed to me sufficient reasons for making the present course philological, not linguistic; and I cannot, without occupying time more appropriately employed otherwise, enter into a discussion of the aims and importance of linguistic studies in their bearing upon etymology, still less in their relation to the great questions connected with the unity of the species and the general laws of intellectual action—the highest problems which unaided humanity can aspire to solve. I freely allow their profound interest and their strict scientific character, but they must, for the present, be the special property of the few, not, like the mother-tongue, the common heritage of the many; and I now again refer to them only to protest against the inference that I deny or depreciate their worth because I think it necessary, in a preparatory course, to exclude them from consideration.

The extravagance of etymologists has brought the whole study of words into popular discredit; and though that study is now pursued in much stricter accordance with philosophic method, instances of wild conjecture and absurd speculation are still by no means wanting. *Ménage*, formerly often, and now sometimes, cited as an authority in French etymology, and of course with respect to the origin of English words borrowed from the French, is among the boldest of these inquirers. He does not hesitate to assign any foreign primitive, no matter how distant the source, as the origin of the French word resembling it; and when none such offers, he coins a Low-Latin root for the occasion.† In such cases,

* THE ETYMOLOGICAL DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, by the Rev. W. W. Skeat, Oxford, 1882, is far superior to any former work of the sort, and is, in fact, with few exceptions, as nearly satisfactory as anything that can be hoped for until our knowledge of the actual history of our own vocabulary shall be much further advanced than it is at present.

† For instance see *faba*, *fabarius*, *fabaricus*, *fabaricotus*, *faricotus*, *haricotus*;—*transverbus*, *transversicus*, *transversicotus*, *transicotus*, *tracotus*,

the detection of the falsehood is difficult, its refutation next to impossible, for in the chaos of monkish and secular writers in that corrupted dialect, who can say what barbarisms may not occur? Ménage is not the only etymologist who has sinned in this way, for it is one of the safest and easiest of literary frauds. Dr. Johnson thought we were not authorized to deny that there might be witches, because nothing proved their non-existence; and the same principle may compel us to pause in disputing a plausible etymology, for want of evidence to show that the supposed root does or does not actually exist in a given vocabulary. The wise old Fuller, of whom no lover of wit, truth, beauty, and goodness can ever tire, says, in reference to an extravagant etymology:

“As for those that count the Tatars the offspring of the ten tribes of Israel, which Salmanasar led away captive, because Tatari or Totari signifieth in the Hebrew and Syriack tongue a residuo or remnant, learned men have sufficiently confuted it. And surely it seemeth a forced and overstrained deduction to farfetch the name of Tartars from a Hebrew word, a language so far distant from them. But no more hereof; because, perchance, herein the woman’s reason hath a masculine truth; and the Tartarians are called so, because they *are* [called] so. It may be curious etymologists (let them lose their wages who work in difficult trifles) seek to reap what was never sown, whilst they study to make those words speak reason, which are only *voces ad placitum*, imposed at pleasure.”

The theory of Fuller was better than his practice, and he not unfrequently indulged in etymological speculations as absurd as that which he ridicules respecting the Tatars, for he derives *compliment*, not, as he says others did, “à completione mentis,” but “à completé mentiri,” because compliments are usually completely mendacious; and elsewhere he quotes with seeming assent Sir John Harrington’s opinion that the old English *elf* and *goblin* came from the names of the two great political factions of the Empire, the Guelphs and Ghibellines. One can hardly believe Roger Ascham serious in deriving *war* from *warre* or *werre*, the old form of the comparative *worse*, because *war* is

ragot;—*mus*, *muratus*, *ratus*, *rat*;—*giboulée*, *nimbus*, *nimbulus*, *nimbulata*, *guimbulata*, *ghimbulata*, *ghibulata*, *giboulée*.

worse than peace;* but even this derivation is only less absurd than Blackstone's of *parson* from *persona*, *persona ecclesiæ*, because the parson personates or represents the church.† The most extraordinary word-fanciers we have had in English literature are Murray and Ker. Murray derives all English, in fact all articulate words, from nine primary monosyllables, which are essentially natural to primitive man. The family likeness between the nine is so strong that Murray might, with much convenience and small loss of probability, have reduced them to one, for they all agree in their vowel and final consonant. The catalogue of these surprisingly prolific roots is this: 1, ag, wag, or hwag; 2, bag, or bwag; 3, dwag; 4, cwag; 5, lag; 6, mag; 7, nag; 8, rag; and 9, swag. Ker is somewhat less ambitious, but quite as original and ingenious in his theories. He found the English public simple enough to buy two editions of a work in two volumes, the object of which is to show that a very large proportion of our current English proverbs are, not translations or imitations of Dutch ones, but mere mispronunciations, corruptions

* Allied to this is Spenser's derivation of *world*:

But when the word woxe old, it woxe warre old,
(Whereof it hight.)

Faerie Queen, B. iv., C. viii., S. xxxi.

The ingenious author of the excellent little work on English Synonyms, edited by Archbishop Whately, supposes *world* to be the participle *whirled*, and says the word was evidently expressive of *roundness*. The *wh* in *whirl*, (*hw* in the corresponding Gothic words,) is radical, and would not have been represented in Anglo-Saxon by *w*, as in *woruld*, *weoruld*, *world*. Besides this, the word *world* is older than the knowledge of the globular form or the rotation of the earth among the Gothic tribes. A still more conclusive argument against this etymology is the fact, that the Anglo-Saxon *woruld*, the Icelandic *verölld*, did not mean the *earth*, the *physical*, but the *moral*, the *human* world, the Latin *seculum*. The Anglo-Saxon name of the *earth* was *middan-geard* or *middan-geard*, corresponding to the Mæso-Gothic *midjungards*. The most probable etymology of *world* seems to be *wer*, (cognate with the Latin *vir*,) *man*, and *old*, *age* or *time*.

† I must here make the *amende honorable* to Blackstone; for notwithstanding the apparent absurdity of this etymology, and the real absurdity of the reasoning by which he supports it, it seems to be certain, as a fact of historical derivation, that *parson* is from *persona*, and not from the Latin *parrochia* through the French *paroisien*. See Skeat's Dictionary, S. V.

This is a good example of the importance of tracing the *history* of words instead of trusting to supposed laws of phonetic change.

of common Dutch phrases and expressions totally different in meaning from that which is ascribed to the proverbs, as we employ them. Thus the proverbial phrase, 'He took the bull by the horns,' is a corruption of 'hii tuck tije bol by die hoo-rens,' which means, *here head calls contrivance in; that it is as it ought to be.* 'As still as a mouse,' is, 'als stille als er meê hose,' *as still as one without shoes* or rather, *as one in his stockings*; and even the national cry, 'Old England forever!' is not plain English at all, but Low-Dutch for 'Hail to your country—evince your zeal for her!'

The general idea is of course too absurd to be met by argument, and the book is of about the same philological value as Swift's Medical Consultation, and other trifles, where the words are Latin in form, but similar in sound to English words of different signification, so that the Latin words *is*, *his*, *honor*, *sic*, mean, *Is his Honor sick?* The speculations of more recent and more eminent philologists, though certainly made more plausible by historical evidence and by apparent analogies, are sometimes not less unreasonable.*

Crambe, a character in the *Memoirs of Scriblerus* much given

* I certainly do not intend to class Dr. Latham with the dreamers to whom I refer in the text, but I must be permitted here to notice what is, at least, an inaccuracy of expression in his etymology of our English word *drake*. He says (*English Language*, 2d Edition, p. 214), "It [*drake*] is derived from a word with which it has but one letter in common; viz., the Latin *anas*, *duck*." The common name of the duck in the Gothic languages is doubtless allied to *anas*, and in most of them the same root occurs in forms which contain the consonantal elements of the word *drake*. Two of these elements, the *r* and *k*, are signs of the masculine termination. The *d* is radical, as are also the corresponding mute *t* in the Latin *anas* (genitive *anat-is*), and the *n* which has been dropped from *drake*, or rather perhaps formed the *d* by coalescence with the *t*, as in modern Greek, where *vr* is pronounced *d*, and therefore *drake* and *anas* are related as being both derived from a common root. But to assert that *drake* is derived from *anas* is not only a violation of the legitimate rules of etymological deduction, but it involves the historical improbability of affirming that a people as old as the Romans themselves were without a name for one of the commonest and most important game-birds of their climate, until they borrowed one from their foreign invaders. In fact, if either nation received the word from the other, instead of both inheriting it from some common but remote source, the habits of the bird in question, whose birthplace and proper home is in the far North, would render it more probable that the Gothic was the original, the Latin the derivative form.

to punning, declares that he was always under the dominion of some particular word, which formed the theme of his puns. Muys, a very late and learned German philologist, who occupies himself with Greek etymology, is, unconsciously no doubt, under the influence of a similar verbal crotchet. The particular word which tyrannizes over his researches is the German verb *stossen*, in English *to push*. There are several Sanscrit roots possessing this signification, and, according to our author, there are few Greek words not derived from some one of them. His own special favorite among these Sanscrit radicals is *dhu*, and he finds a probability, amounting very nearly to certainty, that the following words, as well as hundreds of others equally discrepant from the primitive type, are derived from it: Agamemnon, Asia, Athene, Ægyptus, βωμός, Gallus, Geryon, Demeter, Eidothea, Helle, Enarete, Zephyrus, Hebe, Jocasta, Leda, Polydeuces, Sisyphus. The process by which these derivations are made out is as simple as possible. Take for instance Gallus. Beginning with *dhu*, spelled *d, h, u*, if you cut off *d*, you have *hu*, whence it is but a step to *hva*; *hva* passes readily into *ga*, and by adding *l*, you obtain *gal*, which wants only the inflectional final syllable *us*, with the reduplication of the *l*, and your word is finished. After this, we may well say that etymology, like misery, makes us acquainted with strange bed-fellows.*

In admitting that most English etymological dictionaries point out the origin of the greater part of our vocabulary, I must limit the concession to words derived, as are the great majority of ours, directly from Greek, Latin, French, or Anglo-Saxon roots still to be found in the recorded literature of those languages. With respect to words which have traditionally descended from the old Gothic storehouse, and which do not occur in the existing remains of Anglo-Saxon literature, or which have been borrowed from remoter sources, and especially with respect to the attempts made by lexicographers to trace English words, through the languages I have named, back to still older dialects, and to detect

* A French epigrammatist says, upon one of Ménage's derivations :

Alphans vient d'équus, sans doute,
 Mais il faut avouer aussi
 Qu'en venant de là jusqu'ici
 Il a bien changé sur la route.

affinities to words belonging to the vocabularies of languages not of the Gothic or Romance stock, I know no English dictionary except Skeat's new etymologicon which is worthy of confidence. Take for example our noun and verb *issue*. Nothing can be plainer than its origin to one who is content with the simple truth. We have borrowed it from the obsolete French *issir*, which, as well as the cognate Italian *uscire*, is evidently a modern form of the compound Latin infinitive *ex-ire*, to go out. A celebrated lexicographer gives, as related words, the French and Italian forms, but he fails to see that they are derived from the Latin *exire*, and suggests that they coincide with the Ethiopic *watsa!* The tendency of this constant search after remote analogies is to lead the inquirer to overlook near and obvious sources of derivation, and to create a perplexity and confusion with regard to the real meaning of words, by connecting them with distant roots slightly similar in form, and, frequently, not at all in signification. There are, in all literatures, numerous instances where words have been corrupted in orthography, and finally changed in meaning, in consequence of the adoption of a mistaken etymology. An example of this is the common adjective *abominable*, which was once altered in form and meaning by a mistake of this sort, though better scholarship has now restored it to its true orthography, and more nearly to its proper signification. It is evidently regularly formed from the Latin verb *abominor*, itself derived from *ab* and *omen*. *Abominable* accordingly involves the notion of that which is in a religious sense profane and detestable, or, in a word, of evil omen; and Milton never uses it, or the conjugate noun *abominations*, except with reference to devilish, profane, or idolatrous objects. Quite early in English literature some sciolist fancied that the true etymology was *ab* and *homo*, and that its proper meaning was *repugnant to humanity, inhuman*. This derivation being accepted, the orthography was changed to *abhominable*, and in old English books it is often used in a sense corresponding to its supposed origin, nor has it even yet fully recovered its appropriate meaning.

We may, in numerous instances, trace back the use of a word to a remote antiquity, and find at the same time that it was employed in many languages between which we are unable to detect any historical or even grammatical relation. When, in such case,

any of the foreign derivative or inflectional changes of the root throw light on the form of the corresponding English word, or when its radical meaning serves to explain any of the different senses which we ascribe to our own vocable, and which are not deducible from its known historical etymology, the fact of the existence of such a word becomes philologically, as well as linguistically, interesting. If, however, the foreign word does not aid us in understanding or employing the corresponding English one, whatever may be its importance in linguistics, it is in English philology, and of course etymology, wholly insignificant. I will borrow an example from languages which I can hardly presume to be familiar to many of my audience, and others from some domestic sources. The Portuguese word *saudade*, which expresses an affectionate, regretful longing for a lost or absent beloved object, has been said by Portuguese scholars to be peculiar to their own tongue, and to have no equivalent in any other European speech.* A similar word, however, with the same

* The Portuguese, as appears from a passage in the *Leal Conselheiro* of King Dom Duarte, prided themselves on this word as early as the fifteenth century.

Se algũa pessoa por meu serviço e mandado de myn se parte, e della sento *suydade*, certo e que de tal partyda nom ey sanha, nojo, pesar, desprazer, nem avorrecymto, ca prazme de seer, e pesarmya se nom fosse; e por se partir algũas vezes vem tal *suydade* que faz chorar, e sospirar como se fosse de nojo. E porem me parece este nome de *suydade* tam proprio que o latym, nem outra linguagem que en saiba, non he pera tal sentido semelhante. *Leal Conselheiro*, Paris, 1842, p. 151.

The editor of the *Leal Conselheiro* quotes a curious passage to the same effect from Dom Francisco Manoel. *Epanaphoras*, 1675, pp. 286, 287.

The orthography, *saudade*, became established about the beginning of the sixteenth century. The forms, *soidade* and *soodade*, which occur in early Portuguese writers, countenance the derivation from the Latin *solus*, but the existence of a similar noun, as well as of cognate verbs of allied signification, in the Scandinavian languages, suggests the possibility that they all belong alike to some Gothic radical.

Ihre thinks the Scandinavian may be from the root of the verb *to seek*, in analogy with a figurative sense of the Latin *querere*, and he cites this couplet from Horace, *Carm. iii. 24* :—

Virtutem incolumem odimus;
Sublatam ex oculis *querimus* invidi.

Here *querimus* means *regret, miss, long for*, and this use of the word is common in the classic writers.

general, and often the same precise, signification, occurs in Icelandic, Swedish and Danish, in the respective forms *saknaðr*, *saknad*, and *Savn*. Now there is no link of relationship, by which any actual connection can be made out between the Scandinavian and the Portuguese words, no common source to which both can be referred, nor does the form or meaning of either serve in the least to explain those of the other. The coincidence is a remarkable fact; it may become linguistically important; but at present it is not of the slightest consequence to the philology of either of the languages in question. In like manner, I understand the English words *father*, *mother*, *brother*, *sister*, not at all the better for knowing that they are used in forms not widely differing from our own, in most of the languages belonging to the Indo-European family.*

It will be found pretty generally true, that with respect to words used in their simple form and literal sense, the study of their derivation is of little use in aiding us to form a just conception of their meaning; but if they are compounds, and especially if their employment in our language is a figurative one, we are essentially assisted by a knowledge of their etymology. If you tell a child that our noun and adjective *purple* is the Anglicised form of the Latin *purpureus*, a word of similar signification, you tell him nothing. So if, for the origin of *precipitate* and *precipitation*, he is barely referred to the Latin *præceps* as the source of these English words, he has learned what is not worth remembering. But if you go further, and explain to him that *præceps* is a compound of *præ*, *before*, and the root of *caput*, *the head*, so that *præceps* and *precipitate* both mean *headforemost* or *headlong*, he will have gained an entirely new conception of the force of the words.

I will illustrate the emptiness of etymology as usually pursued, and its practical value when studied by simpler and less pretentious methods, by the history of our English word *grain* in a

* I may cite as examples of similar accidental coincidences, the American *switch*, English *shunt* (of a railway), and the Italian *sviatojo* (from *via*); the cant American *absquatulate* (to abscond), and the Italian *sgattainolare*, of the same signification. 'He gathered up his traps,' is literal in the mouth of the American woodsman, but in Catalan, where *trap* signifies a *tent*, it means, he broke up his camp.

single one of its many senses. I observe in reading *Il Penseroso* that Milton describes Melancholy as clad

“ All in a robe of darkest grain.”

Upon turning to Webster for an explanation of *grain*, I find its etymology in twelve closely printed lines, giving twenty-five words which the lexicographer supposes to be cognate with *grain*, from thirteen languages. Fifteen meanings, several of which, though distinguished, are indistinguishable, are ascribed to *grain*. Among them is *dye* or *tincture*, no particular hue being assigned to the dye, and as an exemplification of this sense of *grain*, the fine descriptive invocation to Melancholy, to which I have alluded, is cited :

“ Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train.”

It is evident that the lexicographer understands Milton as clothing the Divinity simply in a garb of a dark color, without indication of the quality of the color ; but this conception of the meaning of *grain*, as used in the passage, is wholly erroneous, as I shall proceed to show.

Of the twenty-five words referred to in Webster's etymology, only the Latin *granum*, with three or four derivatives from it in as many modern languages, and the Scandinavian *gren*, have any probable affinity with *grain*, in origin or in any of its significations, and with the exception of the sense of a *prong* or *tine*, and perhaps, also, of *fibre* and the imitations of fibre in painting, every one of the fifteen meanings ascribed to the word is referable to the Latin *granum*, and not to any of the other roots adduced. Both these exceptions belong to a Gothic radical (in Swedish, *gren*) signifying a branch or twig, and still extant in the Scottish dialect with the same sense.

The history of the word *grain*, in the sense of a dye, is this : The Latin *granum* signifies a seed or kernel, and it was early applied to all small objects resembling seeds, and finally to all minute particles. Some etymologists, however, derive *granum* from the root of the verb *to grind*, and define it as *that which is*

ground, or *meal*, as the German *mehl* from *mahlen*. This I hold to be an inversion of the genealogy of the word. A species of oak, or ilex, the *quercus coccifera* of botanists, common on all the Mediterranean coasts, and especially in Spain where it is called *coscoja*, (a corruption of the Latin *cusculium* or *quisquilium*,) is frequented by an insect of the genus *coccus*, the dried body, or rather ovarium, of which furnishes a variety of red dyes. From its round seed-like form, the prepared *coccus* was called in later Latin, *granum*, and so great were the quantity and value of the *coccus* or *granum* produced in Spain, that, according to Pliny, it paid half the tribute of the province.* It is even said that the city and territory of Granada derived their name from the abundance of *granum*, *coccus*, or *grain*, gathered there.† *Granum* becomes *grana* in Spanish, *graine* in French, and from one of these is derived the particular use of the English word *grain*, which we are now investigating. *Grain*, then, as a coloring material, strictly taken, means the dye produced by the *coccus* insect, often called, in commerce and in the arts, *kermes*, but inasmuch as the *kermes* dye, like that extracted from the *murex* of Tyre, is capable of assuming a considerable variety of reddish tones or hues, Milton and

* *Coccus* is from the Greek *κόκκος*, a *kernel* or *berry*. *Κόκκος* was one of the names applied by the Greeks to the insect and the tree on which it bred. From *κόκκος* comes the adjective *κόκκινος*, denoting the color obtained from the insect, as also the Latin *coccinus* and *coccineus* employed in the same sense. In the Wycliffite translations of the Bible, this word is found in eight different forms, *colt* being the nearest to the root, *coctyn* the most remote from it. *Cottyn*, which occurs in Apocalypse xvi. 12, in the version printed as Wycliffe's in Bagster's Hexapla, is either a typographical error, or a various reading for *coctyn*, and not an early orthography of *cotton*.

The form *coccus* (masculine) is the modern scientific name of the *insect*, but I believe the neuter, *coccum*, alone occurs in classical Latin.

† This derivation of Granada was, I believe, first suggested by Calepin, and it is adapted by Facciolati and by some Spanish authors, as, for example, by Pellicer, *El Fenix*, 34, E, but the name has been generally supposed to be of Arabic origin. In the chronicles of the Middle Ages, it is generally written *Gernatha* or *Garnatha*, and upon the supposition that this is the true orthography, various absurd Arabic etymologies have been suggested; but as it appears from the *España Sagrada*, new edition, vol. xxix., pp. 201, 209, that Granada in Catalonia was called *Granatum* in the tenth and eleventh centuries, I think that the form *Garnatha* is a Moorish corruption, and that Calepin's conjecture is probably well founded.

other English poets often use *grain* as equivalent to *Tyrian purple*. We will now apply this etymology to the interpretation of the passage which Webster cites from Milton, and will also examine all the other instances in which *grain* is employed in the sense of a color by that poet and by Shakespeare.

First, then, the verses from *Il Penseroso* :

“ Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast and demure,
All in a robe of darkest *grain*,
Flowing with majestic train.”

Here the epithet “darkest,” and the character and attributes of the Divinity who is clothed in grain, show that the poet meant, not, as Webster supposes, a mourning black, or a dull, neutral tint, but the violet shade of purple. What a new beauty of imagery this explanation sheds on one of Milton’s most exquisite creations !

Coleridge, who, of all English writers, is most attentive to etymology, and most scrupulously accurate in the use of words, in the preface to his *Aids to Reflection* has this passage, apparently, however, a quotation : “doing as the dyers do, who, having first dip’t their silks in colors of less value, then give them the last tincture of crimson in *grain*,” thus employing the word with a just appreciation of its meaning in ordinary poetic usage, but assigning to it a lighter shade than the purple or violet which it evidently designates in the passage cited from *Il Penseroso*. It should, however, be observed, by way of note, that the process of dyeing, in ancient times when both grain and Tyrian purple were in use as coloring materials, was nearly the reverse of that described by Coleridge ; for Pliny, speaking of the practice of dyeing with two colors or shades of color, says : “Nay, it will not serve their turne to mingle the abovesaid tinctures of seafishes, but they must also doe the like by the die of landcolors ; for when a wool or cloth hath taken a crimson or skarlet *in graine*, it must be dyed again in the Tyrian purple, to make the light red, and fresh lustie-gallant. As touching the *graine* serving to give tincture, it is red, and cometh out of Galatia, or else about Emerita in Portugal,” etc. Holland’s Pliny, ix., 41.

Again, in the 11th Book of *Paradise Lost*, v. 243-9, Milton employs the same word to denote still another tone of color :

“ The archangel soon drew nigh,
Not in his shape celestial, but as man
Clad to meet man : over his lucid arms
A military vest of purple flow'd
Livelier than Melibœan, or the *grain*
Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old
In time of truce ; Iris had dipped the woof.”

In this passage a brighter color, approaching to scarlet, is evidently meant. Now, *grain* of Sarra is *grain* of Tyre, Sarra being used by some Latin authors for Tyrus, and *grain of Sarra* is equivalent to *purple of Tyre*, Milton here employing, as I have just observed, the name of the color obtained from the kermes, coccus or grain, as synonymous with purple of Tyre, which latter dye was the product of different species of shell-fish.* The Greek *πορφύρεος*, and the Latin *purpureus*, embraced all shades of color between scarlet and dark violet inclusive, because all these hues were obtained from shell-fish by different mixtures and processes. In fact, though in common speech we generally confine our use of the English *purple* to the violet hue, yet it is employed poetically, and in reference to ceremonial costumes, to express as wide a range of colors as the corresponding Greek and Latin adjectives.†

* The ancient writers carefully distinguish between the costly shell-fish purple and the cheaper coccum. Thus Martial V. 28:

Non nisi vel cocco madidâ, vel murice tinctâ
Veste nites.

And Ulpian Dig. xxxii. 1, 70, 13.

Purpuræ appellatione omnis generis purpuram contineri puto, sed coccum non continebitur.

There is an interesting and even eloquent passage on the value attached by the Romans to the true purple in Pliny, Nat. Hist. IX. 86.

Aelfric, Homilies, ii., 258-4, uses *wolcn-read* for scarlet in giving the narrative of the Passion, where Matth. xxvii. 28 has, in the Greek text, *χλαμίδα κοκκίνην*. *Wolcn*, *wolcen*, *weoluc*, *weolc*, the modern Eng. *whelk*, is a shell-fish, in this case, the Tyrian murex. This root is employed in Anglo-Saxon in many compounds denoting purple or scarlet, and the Anglo-Saxons must of course have been acquainted with the source from which the ancient purples were obtained.

† Many shades of Tyrian purple are enumerated in Pliny. Nat. Hist., ix. 62, 63, (Holland's Trans., ix. 39-41.)

In describing the "proper shape" of the Archangel Raphael in the Fifth Book of *Paradise Lost*, the poet uses *grain* in the sense of purple, and gives to it at once the whole extent of its varied significations :

Six wings he wore, to shade
His lineaments divine : the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad came mantling o'er his breast
With regal ornament ; the middle pair
Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
And colors dipp'd in heaven ; the third his feet
Shadowed from either heel with feathered mail,
Sky-tinctured *grain*.

Those who remember the hues which the painters of the sixteenth century give to the wings of angels, will be at no loss to understand the epithet *sky-tinctured*, which here qualifies *grain*. *Sky-tinctured* is not necessarily azure, for *sky* in Old English and the cognate languages, meant cloud,* and Milton does not confine its application to the concave blue, but embraces in the epithet all the brighter tints which belong to meteoric phenomena. Doubtless he had in his mind the angels that he had seen depicted by

* *Sky* in sense of cloud.

* * * a certeine winde *
That blewe so hidously and hie,
That it ne left not a *skie*
In all the welkin long and brode.

CHAUCER, *House of Fame*, iii. 508-511.

* * * all sodeinly
She passeth as it were a *skie*
All clene out of this ladies sight.

GOWER, *Conf. Amant.* iv., Paul's ed., ii. 50.

* * * Aurora, which afore the sunne
Is wont t' enchase the blacke *skyes* dunne.

LYDGATE, in *Troy-Boke*, *Warton*, II. xxiii.

That purpoure sone * * *
* * * * *

Throw goldin *skyes* putting up his head.

IDEM, *Warton*, II. xxx.

The Promptorium Parvulorum has : "Hovyfi yfi the eyre, as byrdys, [bryddys,] or *skyes*, or other lyke," &c.

the great Italian masters, and chose the phrase "sky-tinctured grain" as embodying, like their pinions, all the gorgeous spontaneous hues of sun-lit cloud, and rainbow, and cerulean vault, together with the richest colors which human cunning had extracted from the materials of creative nature. It is interesting to observe how the brilliancy of the image floating in the poet's fancy pervades the whole passage, and anticipates, by a vague and general expression, the specification of the particular colors which he ascribes to the wings of the archangel; for in his description of the first pair, which

Came mantling o'er his breast
With *regal* ornament :

he no doubt meant to suggest the imperial purple, the appropriate cognizance of loyalty.

In *Comus* [748] we find *grain* again employed as the name of a particular color :

"It is for homely features to keep home,
They had their name thence ; coarse complexions,
And cheeks of sorry *grain* will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the housewife's wool.
What need a vermeil tinctured lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?"

Grain here does not refer to the texture of the skin, which is sufficiently indicated by the epithet *coarse* in the preceding line, but to the color, the *vermilion* of the cheek and lips which, for those devoted to such humble duties, the enchanter *Comus* thinks may well be *sorry* or of inferior tint.* This interpretation is confirmed by a passage in *Chaucer*,

* There is a curious discussion in *Athenæus*, xiii. 8, on the propriety of the application of the epithet purple to the cheek, in the verse of *Phrynichus* :

Δάμπει δ' ἐπὶ πορφύρεαις παρηλαί φῶς ἔρωτος ;

and that of *Simonides* :

Πορφύρετον ἀπὸ στόματος λείσα φωνὴν παρθένου,

the former of which, no doubt, suggested to *Gray* his

"purple light of love,"

and to earlier poets the similar expressions collected in *Mitford's* edition of *Gray*.

“His lippes reed as rose,
His rode is like scarlet en *grayn* ;”

rode meaning complexion. And in the epilogue to the Nonnes Preestes Tale, in Tyrwhitt's edition, Chaucer, speaking of a man of a sanguine complexion, says :

Him nedeth not his colour for to dien,
With Brazill, ne with *grain* of Portingale.

The phrase *purple-in-grain*, applied to the beard in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, I. 2, signifies a color obtained from kermes, and doubtless refers to a hair-dye of that material :

Bottom.—Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I best to play it in ?

Quin.—Why, what you will.

Bottom.—I will discharge it in either your straw-colored beard, your orange-tawny beard, your *purple-in-grain* beard, or your French crown-colored beard, your perfect yellow.

Again, Webster defines the phrase *to dye in grain*, “to dye in the raw material, as wool or silk, before it is manufactured.” That the phrase is popularly misunderstood, and has long been commonly used in this sense is true, but the original signification is dyed *with grain* or kermes.

The explanation of this familiar and figurative sense, which is given by the lexicographer as the proper and literal one, is simple. The color obtained from kermes or grain was a peculiarly durable, or as it is technically called, a *fast* or fixed dye, for *fast* used in this sense is, etymologically, *fixed*. When then a merchant recommended his purple stuffs, as being dyed in *grain*, he originally meant that they were dyed with *kermes*, and would wear well, and this phrase, by a common process in language, was afterwards applied to other colors, as a mode of expressing the quality of durability.* Thus in the *Comedy of Errors*, (iii. 2,) to the observation of Antipholus :

* The bright reds of the old Brussels tapestry, so remarkable for the durability as well as the brilliancy of their tints, are known to have been dyed with kermes or grain.

“There is another sort of *Tunalls* which * * * beares another commoditie and profit, which is of the *grains*, for that certaine small wormes breede in the

That's a fault that water will mend—

Dromio replies :

No, Sir, 'tis in *grain* ; Noah's flood could not do it.

And in Twelfth Night, (act 1, scene 5,) when Olivia had unveiled, and speaking of her own face had asked :

Is it not well done ?

to Viola's insinuation that her complexion had been improved by art ;

Excellently done, if God did all ;

Olivia replies :

'Tis in *grain*, Sir ; 'twill endure wind and weather.

In both these examples it is the sense of permanence, a well-known quality of the purple produced by the *grain* or *kermes*, that is expressed.* It is familiarly known that if wool be dyed before spinning, the color is usually more permanent than when the spun yarn or manufactured cloth is first dipped in the tincture. When the original sense of *grain* grew less familiar, and it was used chiefly as expressive of *fastness* of color, the name of the effect was transferred to an ordinary known cause, and *dyed in grain*, originally meaning dyed with kermes, then dyed with fast color, came at last to signify dyed in *the wool* or other raw ma-

leaves of this tree, * * * and this is that Indian Cochenille so famous, and wherewith they die *in grains*." Purchas, iii. 957. Cochineal yields colors much like those obtained from coccum or grana. Hence the name of *grain* was applied to it, and this passage among many others shows that dyeing *in grain* meant dyeing *with* coccum or grana, or with chocineal.

To the same purpose are the following expressions to which a friend refers me in Hakluyt, ed. 1589: "violets in *graine* and fine reds be most worne"; "violets died in *graine* with purple colors and fine reds," p. 380; "*Graine* that you dye scarlet withall," 383.

* As examples of the figurative use of the phrase, *in grain*, see de Meung *Testament*, p. 487.

Amour d'omme envers fame n'est mie tainte *en graine* ;
Por trop pou se destaint, por trop pou se desgrainc ;

and Chaucer's *Squire's Tale*, line 511 :

So depe *in greins* he dedede his coloures.

terial. The verb *ingrain*, meaning to incorporate a color or quality with the natural substance, comes from *grain* used in this last sense, and is now very extensively employed in both a literal and a figurative acceptation.

Kermes, which I have used as a synonym of *grana* or *grain*, is the Arabic and Persian name of the coccus insect, and the word occurs in a still older form, *krmi*, in Sanscrit. From this root are derived the words *carmine* and *crimson*, common to all the European languages.* The Romans sometimes applied to the coccus the generic name *vermiculus*, a little worm or insect. *Vermiculus* is the diminutive of *vermis*, which is doubtless cognate with the Sanscrit *krmi*, as is also the English word *worm*. From *vermiculus* comes *vermilion*, the name of an allied color erroneously supposed to be produced by the *kermes*, though in fact of a different origin, and I may add that *cochineal*, as the name both of a dye which has now almost wholly superseded the European *grain*, and of the American insect which produces it, is derived, through the Spanish, from *coccum*, the Latin name of the Spanish insect. Johnson, and even Richardson, mistake the meaning of *grain*, and ascribe to it the same signification as Webster. Richardson derives it from the Saxon *geregnan*, certainly a wrong etymology, and they both refer

* Italian, *chermisi*, *chermisino*. See Tommaseo, s. v.

The French employ both *cramoisi*, *crimson*, and *écarlate*, *scarlet*, as intensives. *Bleu cramoisi* meant, in Old French, *deep blue*, *écarlate noir*, *deep black*, and we find in Foulques Fitz Warin, p. 70, "e se vestirent de un escarlet vert," and dressed in *deep green*. So in Kyng Alisaunder, which was translated from the French, v. 4986-7:

Thy clothen hem with gryns and ermyne
With golde and siluer and *skarlet* pers fine;

where *skarlet* pers means *deep blue*.

In both languages, these words are used figuratively in an analogous sense. A rogue *in grain* is a thoroughly corrupt knave. *Etre sot ou laid en cramoisi* is, to be thoroughly foolish or ugly, and Cotgrave gives "sot en cramoisi, an ass *in grain*." Rabelais, v. xlvi., has *en cramoisi* for perfectly: "Par saint Jan ie rhythmery comme les aultres, ie le sens bien attendez, et mayez pour excusé si ie né rythme en *cramoisy*."

The verb *ingrain* originally signified dyed *with grain*.

Hire robe was ful riche
Of reed scarlet *engreyned*.

PIERS PLOUGHMAN, Vision, 906.

to most of the passages I have quoted, as exemplifications of the erroneous definition they have given it. This is a remarkable oversight, because *grain*, as the English for *coccum*, was in very general use in the seventeenth century, and it is only recently that *kermes* has superseded it. Good exemplifications of this employment of the word will be found in Holland's Pliny, i. 259, 261, 461, ii. 114, and in many other old English writers.

It will, I think, be admitted that in every passage which I have cited in illustration of the meaning of the word *grain*, the knowledge of its true origin and signification gives additional force and beauty to the thought in the expression of which it is employed, and I have selected it as a striking example of the advantages to be derived from the careful study of words, and especially of the light which is thus often thrown upon obscure figurative expressions, as contrasted with the insignificance of the bare fact that the same word or root exists in other languages. It is, however, rarely the case that a simple uncompounded word so well repays the labor of investigation, though the analysis of many compound words will be found equally instructive.

The importance of habitual attention to the exact meaning of words, considered simply as a mental discipline, can hardly be overrated, and etymology is one of the most efficient means of arriving at their true signification. But etymology alone is never a sure guide. In passing from one language to another, words seldom fail to lose something of their original force, or to acquire some new signification, and we can never be quite safe on this point, until we have established the precise meaning of a word by a comparison of different passages where it occurs in good authors.

LECTURE IV.

FOREIGN HELPS TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH.

FROM the opinions I have already expressed, it will have been observed, that I do not hold any wide range of linguistic learning necessary to the attainment of a good knowledge of English etymology. I am equally well persuaded that English grammar, so far as respects the application of its principles to practical use, may be thoroughly mastered with little or no aid from foreign sources. The purpose of the present remarks will be to enforce this opinion, and in a cursory way to point out how far the study of foreign languages is useful in this respect, and what particular tongues are most important to the student for the purposes of English philology. In considering the subject of grammatical inflections in a subsequent part of the course, I shall particularly notice the relations between inflected and uninflected languages, and for this reason I shall, on this occasion, refer to the grammar of the classical languages only in very general terms.*

* A speaker, who strives to accustom himself to accuracy of thought and precision of expression, is often made painfully sensible of the danger of misapprehension to which he is exposed in discoursing upon subjects incapable of illustration by visible symbols, representations, or experiments. The danger is much increased, if the range of his discussion is comprehensive. His language must necessarily be condensed, and his propositions must succeed each other with a rapidity which hardly allows the unprepared hearer to distinguish and comprehend them. Besides this, he must often express himself in general terms, omitting the exceptions and qualifications which are necessary for the exhibition of the whole truth. In this latter necessity, lies one of the most fertile sources of error with respect to all those doctrines which are communicated by general propositions. Again, so strong is the natural tendency to generalize that which is particular, that every public teacher runs also the opposite risk of being understood to announce as universal propositions opinions which he intends to confine to very special cases. It is against this last mistake that I am at this moment particularly solicitous to guard. While I admit that a knowledge of

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It is an apophthegm of Goethe, that "He who is acquainted with no foreign tongue knows nothing of his own." The indiscriminate admiration with which this great writer is regarded by his followers, leads them to consider his most trivial and unguarded utterances as oracles. Even so able a linguist as Heyse has quoted this apophthegm as an authority in proof of the value and importance of linguistic studies; but I must express my total dissent from both what is expressed and what is implied in this sweeping declaration.* If, by *knowledge*, is meant the power of

other tongues, including the Greek and Latin as well as the modern dialects more nearly allied to our own, may be so employed as to be of great value as an auxiliary to the study of English—a truth of which this course of lectures will adduce many illustrations—I am proceeding to avow my conviction, that the value of foreign philological studies, *in this particular respect*, is too often overrated by classical scholars. And here I beg not to be understood as meaning any thing more than I express. I am speaking of the study of one grammar as an aid to the knowledge of another; of languages, not of letters; of the forms of speech, not of the embodied thoughts of the great masters of literature in other tongues. As a means of that encyclopedic culture which is one of the most imperious demands of modern society, an acquaintance with foreign, and especially with classical, literature is indispensable, because the records of knowledge and of thought are many-tongued, and even if a genial writer could have framed his original conceptions or equivalents of them in a different speech, it is certain that another mind can, only in the fewest cases, adequately translate them. We can therefore, in general, know little of ancient or foreign intellectual action, without a knowledge of the medium of thought in which that action has been exerted.

* The observation of a long life has convinced me that the best method of acquiring a thorough knowledge of English is the study of English alone, whether by books or by the ear. Of the two persons I have known most remarkable for strict conformity to the best usage in conversational English one was an Alsatian barber who had a shop in a district in New York city chiefly inhabited by cultivated persons; the other was a Vermont farmer, who kept a small inn in a country town and who was often a member of the State Legislature, where he had occasion to make oratorical use of his knowledge of English. He had much pride on the subject, and I have often asked him about the methods of his study—for to speak good English was the study of his life. He told me that he followed the best speakers whom he had an opportunity to hear, but that he had learnt most of all from his mother. On one occasion when I was conducting a law-suit for him, a leading witness on the opposite side testified he had said in a discussion about the merits of two eminent politicians, that *Mr. A. was not to be named in the same day with Mr. B.* My client told me afterwards that the loss of the suit grieved him much less than the public statement that he had sanctioned an expression which he regarded as a vulgarism, though it was then much in use. "You know,"

expressing or conceiving the laws of a particular language in formal rules, the opinion may be well founded, but if it refers to the capacity of understanding, and skill in properly using, our own tongue, all observation shows it to be very wide of the truth. Goethe, himself, certainly knew German, and his intellectual training and general culture were no doubt much advanced by the study of other literatures, but, if tried by the present standard of philological learning, or even by that of his own time, he must be pronounced at best an indifferent linguist, and it would be very difficult to trace any of the excellences of his marvelously felicitous style to the direct imitation, or even the unconscious influence, of foreign models. He declares, himself, that his knowledge of French was acquired by practice, "without grammar or instruction," and remarks that in his early years his attention was specially devoted to German writers of the sixteenth century. Probably the study of these authors contributed more than any thing else to the diction he finally adopted; for his writings contain no evidence of familiarity with the remoter etymological sources of his own tongue, or with the special philologies of the cognate languages. The comparison of his autobiography, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, in which his style reached perhaps its culminating point, with the best writers of antiquity, will show few parallelisms in any thing that can be said to be purely indicative of classical learning. The works of Goethe, in which critics, unacquainted with his literary biography, would find the strongest internal evidence of a great knowledge of foreign philology and literature, would probably be the Oriental poems in the *West-Oestlicher Divan*, and his Slavic imitations. Yet I believe it is quite certain that he knew nothing of Arabic and Persian, or of the Slavonic languages. He had formed his acquaintance with the characteristics of those literatures only from translations and critical discussions, and his reproduction of their poetry in his native German was not a proof of linguistic

he said, "and every man who knows me and knows English knows, that I allow myself to use no such colloquialisms." This struck me especially because, only a few days before, I had heard the very same expression employed in a moment of temporary embarrassment by one of the most eloquent and certainly the most fastidious of New England orators.

learning, but it was the exercise of a genius above learning, of a power that divined and appropriated the spirit of compositions, to the comprehension of which other men attain only by a critical study of the letter. I might, therefore, confidently rely on the works of Goethe himself, as a test example in refutation of the theory which ascribes such value to linguistic pursuits. All literature is full of similar instances, and there is scarcely a nation which boasts a written speech, that cannot produce writers of the highest rank, so far as respects force, accuracy, and purity of diction, whose knowledge of language was confined to their mother-tongue. The measure of our knowledge of a particular art, is the ability to use it, and he who most aptly says that which he has to say, has given the best evidence that he possesses, in full extent, what is appropriately called *knowledge* of the tongue he employs. To *can* and to *ken* or *know* express, both in German and English, associate ideas and are related words, and in all that belongs to human language, as in most other fields of thought and action, knowledge is power, and power is knowledge.

At the most flourishing period of ancient Grecian literature, the Greeks had developed no grammatical system, nor is there any satisfactory evidence, internal or external, that written rules for the use of their language then existed. All this was the work of later ages. In no era of their literary history, did they produce critical treatises which exhibit a sound theoretical acquaintance with the principles of general grammar, and their etymological researches were never any thing but absolutely puerile. The great writers of Greece, as there is every reason to believe, were, in general, wholly ignorant of any speech but the common tongue of the Hellenic nation, and yet no literature can exhibit more marked examples, not merely of high intellectual culture and power, but of the most consummate dexterity in the choice and collocation of words, in the adaptation of style and vocabulary to the subject, or a more delicate sense of fitness and propriety in determining when to conform to the laws of rigorous grammatical concord, and when to rise above them; when to give full expression to every word that could modify the thought to the mind of the listener, and when to electrify him by bold ellipsis and sudden transition. The mightiest master of words the world ever knew was Demosthenes, who certainly was acquainted with

no language but Greek, and who built his own magic style on the foundation of Thucydides, a writer most remarkable for his independence of all that was arbitrary, all that was formal, and all that was conventional in the dialect of his country and his time.*

The education of this greatest of historical writers was purely Hellenic. No study of old Pelasgic, or Egyptian, or Phœnician, or Persian, had taught him any thing of the remote analogies and primitive etymologies of the Attic speech, nor could his principles of literary composition have been deduced from grammatical or rhetorical precepts, but the untutored expression of his native genius spontaneously shaped itself into the style, which has made his great work what he prophetically hoped, $\epsilon\varsigma\ \acute{\alpha}\epsilon\iota$, $\epsilon\varsigma$ perpetual possession for all coming ages.

The frequency of obvious etymologies in Greek, it may be thought, would serve to a native the same purpose as does the study of foreign tongues to us who speak a language of so mixed a

* It is often impossible to resolve the language of Thucydides and of other early writers into what are technically called periods, and we frequently observe the absence of a periodic structure in the conversation, not merely of unschooled persons, but of all who habitually speak in an inartificial style. I may illustrate the manner of Thucydides, certainly not with a view of ridiculing the diction of that immortal author, but in a way intelligible to persons not familiar with Greek, by an extract from a pugilistic challenge of about the year 1700, which I find in the *New York Tribune*, in a letter from a correspondent at Buffalo, dated Oct. 16, 1858. It is said to have been taken from an old newspaper in possession of Mr. Placide, and if not genuine, it is at least *ben trovato*.

"I, *Felix Maguire*, first master of the fist in the Kingdom of Ireland, tutor to the noted Mr. Holmes, who has fought the celebrated Mr. Figg this season with general applause, the last of which battles I was engaged with him myself, whereas I hit the said Mr. Figg on the belly and gave him other convincing proof of my judgment therein, on Wednesday, the 11th instant, when, contrary to all expectation, Mrs. Stokes, styled the invincible, matchless, unconquerable city championess, took on her to condemn the method of Mr. Holmes' displaying his skill before a grand appearance assembled, which, with regret, I was obliged to hear, and in regard that said gentleman was my pupil, I so far resent it that I hereby invite Mr. James Stokes, together with the said Elizabeth, his wife, at their own seat of valor, and at the time appointed, to face and fight me and a woman I have trained up to the science from her infancy, one of my own country, and who I doubt not will as far exceed Mrs. Stokes as she is said to have done those she has hitherto been concerned with."

character. But there is a large proportion of the Greek vocabulary whose derivation is very obscure, and though the perpetual habit of forming words at will must have drawn the attention of the Greeks to the composite character of their vocables, and to the sources of figurative and abstract words, and of terms of art drawn from humble and familiar roots, yet such speculations do not seem to have been systematically followed, nor does the manner in which Greek authors use established compounds often betray any consciousness of their origin.

The etymology of words compounded of very familiar roots will no doubt often occur to those who use them. The word *steam-boat* is very apt to suggest the notion of the agency by which such vessels are propelled, and the boy who asks for *ginger-bread*, the ambrosial cake of rustic life, is reminded by its very name of the characteristic ingredient which enters into the composition of that delicacy. But long use deadens us to the susceptibility of such images, and if the source of a word is in the least unfamiliar, it habitually passes unnoticed. I have heard a distinguished poet say that the Latin *imago* first suggested itself to him as the root of the English word *imagination*, when, after having been ten years a versifier, he was asked by a friend to define this most important term in the critical vocabulary of his art.

To come down to later times, and a remote but cognate people, we find in the early literature of Iceland a historical work of uncertain authorship, but probably of the twelfth century, entitled *Njála*, the saga or biography of *Njáll*, a work betraying no evidence of classical or other foreign linguistic knowledge, and most certainly bearing no analogy to any known model of composition in any other language, but which, as an example of pure stylistic excellence, may fairly be pronounced altogether unsurpassed by any existing monument in the narrative department of any literature ancient or modern.

Scarcely less conclusive on this point is the example of Shakespeare. We cannot indeed positively deny that the great dramatist had enjoyed a partial scholastic training, yet on the other hand there is no extraneous proof that he possessed any foreign linguistic attainment, and the attempt to infer his classical education from the internal evidence of his works is simply a begging of the

question. It has been argued that Shakespeare was a classical scholar, because Ben Jonson says he possessed "small Latin and less Greek," while another contemporary ascribes to him "little Latin and no Greek." Halliwell thinks he certainly knew Italian, because Manningham compares *Twelfth Night* to an Italian play called *Inganni*. But such proofs as these are even feebler than those by which it has been attempted to convict him of deer-stealing, or to show, now that he was a cabin-boy, now an incipient Lord Chancellor. So far as concerns the facts of ancient and modern European history and biography, we know that the English reader had, through translations, abundant means of access to all the information on these points which Shakespeare displays, and in an age when prominent writers affected Latinism in style, classical turns of expression were too common in English to need to be sought in the dead languages alone. The supposition of such a scholastic training as even a very moderate acquaintance with Latin alone implies, is at variance with the known facts of Shakespeare's history; and it is highly improbable that a young man of his country and social condition, who married and entered upon the duties and cares of active life at the age of eighteen, could have acquired such an amount of philological learning as perceptibly to affect his style and his command of the resources of his native tongue. We are then fairly entitled to class him among the men of one speech, until stronger evidence shall be adduced than has yet appeared to the contrary.

Even "learned" Ben Jonson was ignorant of French, as appears from his Sonnet addressed to Joshua Sylvester; and not many English authors have possessed a more attractive or more strictly idiomatic style, not many have exhibited a wider variety of expression, than Izaak Walton, but Walton had no classical learning, and his orthography, *hogoe** for *haut goût*, shows that he knew as little of French. Our American Franklin formed his remarkable style by the assiduous study of English models, before he had any acquaintance with other languages, and we have had in our own times an illustrious example of the possession of an excellent style and a very wide command of words, without any philological attainment whatever, except such as can

* Compleat Angler, edition of 1658, p. 160.

be acquired by the study of the English tongue. The late Hugh Miller, to whom I refer, had few contemporaneous superiors as a clear, forcible, accurate, and eloquent writer, and he uses the most cumbrous Greek compounds as freely as monosyllabic English particles. Yet it is certain that he was wholly ignorant of all languages but that in which he wrote, and its Northern provincial dialects.

When we consider the wide range of modern intellectual pursuits, the immense accumulation of apparently isolated but certainly related facts, which the press in its multiplied forms of activity is hourly bringing before us, the vast additions to even our fireside vocabulary from every branch of natural science, every field of speculative investigation, it is easy to perceive that we require many accessory disciplines to make us thorough masters even of the dialect of ordinary cultivated society. To exemplify: though the terms *mathematics* and *metaphysics* are themselves Greek, yet our metaphysical and mathematical nomenclatures are, with modified meanings, borrowed chiefly from the Latin, our chemical from the Greek, and hundreds of words have been introduced from the dialects of these studies into the vocabulary of common life, often indeed with changes or qualifications of signification, but still retaining much of their original value. Now, no amount of classical knowledge will enable us to comprehend the meaning attached to most of these words in the modern vocabulary. *Hydrogen* and *oxygen*, *miocene* and *pleiocene*, are modern compounds of Greek roots, but however familiar their radicals, these terms would no more explain themselves to the intelligence of a Greek, than to an unlettered Englishman. Their scientific signification must be sought in scientific treatises, and the etymology of such words is of no importance as a guide to their meaning, though as a remembrancer, it may be of some value.* We cannot learn all words through other words. There is a large and rapidly increasing part of all modern vocabularies, which can be comprehended only by the observation of nature, scientific experiment, in short by the study of things, and therefore Goethe might have said, with greater truth, "He that is imbued with no scientific culture has no knowledge of his mother-tongue."

* See Lecture ix.

It must, nevertheless, be admitted that a knowledge of certain other philologies is a highly useful auxiliary in the study of our own. Indeed, so important are such studies, and so few are they who will seriously set themselves about the investigation of the structural laws of the English tongue, with such seemingly inadequate helps alone as it offers to facilitate the researches of the native inquirer, that in laying down general plans of education, a course of foreign philology and literature has been usually prescribed, avowedly as a collateral means of instruction in English grammar and syntax, rather than as an independent discipline.

There are two languages, which, considered simply as philological aids to the student of English, must take precedence, the one as having contributed most largely to our vocabulary and built up the framework of our speech, the other, both as having somewhat influenced the structure of English, and as being in itself a sort of embodiment of universal grammar, a materialization, I might almost say a petrification, of the radical principles of articulate language. These are the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin tongues.

When an intelligent foreigner commences the study of English, he finds every page sprinkled with words whose form unequivocally betrays a Greek or Latin origin, and he observes that these terms are words belonging to the dialect of the learned professions, of theological discussion, of criticism, of elegant art, of moral and intellectual philosophy, of abstract science and of the various branches of natural knowledge. He discovers that the words which he recognizes as Greek and Latin and French have dropped those inflections which, in their native use, were indispensable to their intelligibility and grammatical significance; that the mutual relations of vocables and the sense of the English period are much more often determined by the position of the words than by their form, and in short that the sentence is built up upon structural principles wholly alien to those of the classical languages, and compacted and held together by a class of words either unknown or very much less used in those tongues. He finds that very many of the native monosyllables are mere determinatives, particles, auxiliaries, and relatives; and he can hardly fail to infer that all the intellectual part of our speech, all that concerns our highest spiritual and temporal interests, is of alien birth, and that only the merest machinery of grammar has been

derived from a native source. Further study would teach him that he had overrated the importance and relative amount of the foreign ingredients; that many of our seemingly insignificant and barbarous consonantal monosyllables are pregnant with the mightiest thoughts, and alive with the deepest feeling; that the language of the purposes and the affections, of the will and of the heart, is genuine English-born; that the dialect of the market and the fireside is Anglo-Saxon; that the vocabulary of the most impressive and effective pulpit orators has been almost wholly drawn from the same pure source; that the advocate who would convince the technical judge, or dazzle and confuse the jury, speaks Latin; while he who would touch the better sensibilities of his audience, or rouse the multitude to vigorous action, chooses his words from the native speech of our ancient fatherland; that the domestic tongue is the language of passion and persuasion, the foreign, of authority, or of rhetoric and debate; that we may not only frame single sentences, but speak for hours, without employing a single imported word; and finally that we possess the entire volume of divine revelation in the truest, clearest, aptest form in which human ingenuity has made it accessible to modern man, and yet with a vocabulary, wherein, saving proper names and terms not in their nature translatable, scarce seven words in the hundred are derived from any foreign source.

In fact, so complete is the Anglo-Saxon in itself, and so much of its original independence is still inherited by the modern English, that if we could but recover its primitive flexibility and plastic power, we might discard the adventitious aids and ornaments which we have borrowed from the heritage of Greece and Rome, supply the place of foreign by domestic compounds, and clothe again our thoughts and our feelings exclusively in a garb of native, living, organic growth.

Such then being the relations between Anglo-Saxon and modern English, it can need no argument to show that the study of our ancient mother-tongue is an important, I may say an essential, part of a complete English education, and though it is neither possible, nor in any way desirable, to reject the alien constituents of the language, and, in a spirit of unenlightened and fanatical purism, thoroughly to Anglicise our speech, yet there is abundant reason to hope that we may recover, and reincorporate into our

common Anglican dialect, many a gem of rich poetic wealth that now lies buried in more forgotten depths than even those of Chaucer's "well of English undefiled."

The value of Anglo-Saxon as a branch of English philology is most familiar in its relations to our etymology, and its importance as an auxiliary in the study of English syntax is far less obvious, though not less real. But the structure of the language is too inartificial to be of much use as an instrument of grammatical *discipline*.

So far as respects English or any other uninflected speech, a knowledge of grammar is rather a matter of convenience as a nomenclature, a medium of thought and discussion *about* language, than a guide to the actual use of it, and it is as impossible to acquire the complete command of our own tongue by the study of grammatical precept, as to learn to walk or swim by attending a course of lectures on anatomy.* I shall show more fully on an-

* As these Lectures are now offered to a wider public than that to which they were originally addressed, I cannot help introducing here a few remarks that may not be inappropriate under the present circumstances. Probably no country in the world has ever drawn so largely on its material and moral resources for the purpose of advancing the education of its people, as has our own. Not to speak of the higher institutions of learning, our common public schools have long been a source of national pride, and have deservedly called forth the warmest sympathies and the best energies of many of our most patriotic and enlightened citizens. Examining Boards have been established in order, as far as possible, to secure competent teachers, and I am assured that the persons who present themselves before these Boards are, as a general rule, found to be thoroughly familiar with the best manuals of English grammar, and perfectly capable of teaching English syntax correctly. Yet many of these same persons, when installed as teachers, will commit, in the very presence of the pupils to whom their example is so important, flagrant violations of the commonest rules of good speaking. They will analyze and parse without fault a difficult passage of Milton, and, in the very process, use phrases in which even the verb and its nominative are at open war. This is perfectly natural in the case of young persons possessing more book instruction than does the family circle to which they belong and in which they live. They speak as they have learned to speak in infancy and childhood, and no amount of grammatical or elocutionary knowledge will enable them to overcome their early habits, unless they are subjected to a careful special training expressly for that purpose—a training which example alone can make really effectual. Now in a country like ours, where patriotism, as well as higher considerations, should make us earnestly desire that every new generation may surpass its precursor in knowledge, is it not most important that such special training should be provided for in all our Normal schools, and in such other institutions as are

other occasion,* that when language had been, to use an expressive Gallicism, once *regimented*, and instruction had grown into an art, grammar was held with the Greeks, and probably also with the Romans, so elementary a discipline, that a certain amount of knowledge of it was considered a necessary preliminary step towards learning to read and write; but in English, grammar has little use except to systematize, and make matter of objective consideration, the knowledge we have acquired by a very different process. It has not been observed in any modern literature, that persons devoted chiefly to grammatical studies are remarkable for any peculiar excellence, or even accuracy, of style, and the true method of attaining perfection in the use of English is the careful study of the actual practice of the best writers in the English tongue.

“Another will say,” argues Sir Philip Sidney in his *Defence of Poesie*, “that English wanteth grammar. Nay, truly, it hath that praise that it wants not grammar; for grammar it might have, but needs it not, being so easie in itselfe, and so void of those cumbersome differences of cases, genders, moods and tenses, which I think was a piece of the tower of Babylon’s curse, that a man should be put to schoole to learne his mother-tongue. But for the uttering sweetly and properly the conceit of the minde, which is the ende of speech, that it hath equally with any other tongue in the world.” The forms of English are so few, its syntax so simple, that they are learned by use before the age of commencing scholastic study, and what remains to be acquired belongs rather to the department of rhetoric than of grammar. “Undoubtedly I have found,” observes Sidney further, “in divers smal learned courtiers a more sound stile than in some possessors of learning; of which I can ghesse no other cause, but that the

particularly designed to fit their alumni to become professional instructors? And would it not be well to employ for this purpose, not a mere technical grammarian and elocutionist, but rather some well-educated lady or gentleman accustomed to hear and to speak the best English from childhood, and whose duty it should be to correct the habitual daily language of the pupils? These corrections should include not merely all grammatical errors, but also all those inelegancies of expression, of enunciation, and of intonation which are now seriously threatening to characterize our speech as a nation.

* See *post*, Lecture xix.

courtier, following that which by practice he findeth fittest to nature, therein (though he know it not) doth *according* to art, though not *by* art; where the other using art to shew art, and not hide art, (as in these cases he should doe,) flieth from nature, and indeed abuseth art." *

Upon questions of construction in inflected languages, where every thing depends on simple verbal form, appeal is made to the sense of sight if the period is written, to that of hearing if pronounced, and the meaning is often determined by no higher faculties than those concerned in the comparison of mere material and sensuous objects. In English, on the contrary, although we have fixed laws of position, yet as position does by no means necessarily conform to the order of thought, and nothing in the forms indicates the grammatical connection of the words, there is a constant intellectual effort to detect the purely logical relations of the constituents of the period, to consider the words in their essence not in their accidents, to divine the syntax from the sense, not infer it from casual endings, and hence it may be fairly said, that the construction and comprehension of an English sentence demand and suppose the exercise of higher mental powers than are required for the framing or understanding of a proposition in Latin.

Nevertheless, a clear objective conception and comprehension of the general principles of syntax is very desirable, and this can hardly be obtained except by the presentation of them in a materialized, and, so to speak, visible shape. To the knowledge of grammar as a science, and therefore to a scientific comprehension of English grammar, as well as of the general principles of language, the study of some tongue organized with a gross and palpable machinery is requisite, and the laws of syntax must be illustrated by exhibiting their application in a more tangible form than can be exemplified in a language so destitute of inflections, and so simple, and consequently so subtle, in its combinations as the English.

This advantage, or, for it is very doubtful whether it is an ad-

* The Greeks had a proverbial saying: *αμειότερον φρασον και σαφέστερον*, 'speak less learnedly and plainer,' which may well be applied to the style of most persons devoted to the study of grammar.

vantage to those who use the language possessing it, this convenience rather, as an educational engine, is eminently characteristic of Latin. The vocabulary of the Latin is neither copious nor precise, its forms are intricate and inflexible, and its literature, as compared with that of Greece, exhibits the inferiority which belongs to all imitative composition. But in the regularity, precision, and distinctness of its inflections and structure, it atones for much of the indefinite mistiness of its vocables, and it is an admirable linguistic machine for the manufacture of the coarser wares of intellectual produce and consumption. For the expression of technicalities, the narration of marches and battles, the description of sieges and slaughters, the enunciation of positive rules of pecuniary right, the promulgation of dictatorial ordinances and pontifical bulls, Latin is eminently fitted. Its words are always

Sic volo, sic jubeo, stet pro ratione voluntas :

and it is almost as much by the imperial character of the language itself—the speech of masters, not of men—as by the commanding position of the people to whom it was vernacular, and of the church which sagaciously adopted it, that it has so powerfully influenced the development and the existing tendencies of all modern European tongues, even of those which have borrowed the fewest words from it.*

* The power of Rome was a more widely diffused, pervading, and all-informing element in the ancient world, than written history alone would authorize us to infer, and we find traces of her language, as well as amazing evidences of her material greatness and splendor, in provinces which we should scarcely otherwise know that her legions had overrun. Not Roman coins only, which commerce might have borne farther than her eagles ever flew, but fortified camps, forums, roads, temples, inscriptions, throughout almost the whole Mediterranean basin as well as the Atlantic slope of the Eastern continent, everywhere attest her power ; while palaces, theatres, aqueducts, baths, buried statues and scattered gems, prove that her taste and luxury had spread from the banks of the Elbe to the sands of the Libyan Desert. The presence, however, of remains of the Latin language and of Roman art is not always to be regarded as proof of the actual subjugation of the countries where such relics are found. With the view partly of familiarizing those whose conquest she meditated with her laws, institutions, and manners, and thus preparing them for the yoke they were destined to wear, and partly of facilitating such conquests by demoralizing the scions of royal and noble families, whose claim upon the loyal attachment of their people was one of the great barriers against the extension of her

The Latin grammar has become a general standard, wherewith to compare that of all other languages, the medium through which all the nations of Christendom have become acquainted with the structure and the philosophy of their own; and technical grammar, the mechanical combinations of language, can be nowhere else more advantageously studied.

While then the study of Anglo-Saxon and of the older literature of English itself promises the most abundant harvest of information with respect to the etymology of the fundamental part of our present speech, and an inexhaustible mine of material for the further enrichment of our native tongue, we must, in spite of the close analogy between the syntax of primitive and modern English, and the great diversity between that of the latter and of Latin, still turn to the speech and literature of Rome as the great source of scientific grammatical instruction.

The Mæso-Gothic, both intrinsically and as being the earliest form in which considerable remains of any dialect cognate with our own have come down to us, is of much philological interest and importance. We have extant in Mæso-Gothic a large proportion of a translation of the gospels and epistles by Ulphilas, (a semi-Arian bishop of that nation in the fourth century,) portions of commentaries on different parts of the New Testament, and some other less important fragments.*

It is a point of dispute how far any of the later Teutonic dialects can claim direct descent from the Mæso-Gothic, but it is certain that it is very closely allied to all of them, and scarcely any modern Germanic forms are too diverse from that ancient tongue to have been derived from it. In variety of inflection and power of derivation and composition, in the possession of a dual and of certain passive forms, and in abundance of radical

sway, it was the policy of Rome to train up at the capital, either as hostages or as national guests, as many foreign princes and other high-born youths as could be gathered from dependent and allied countries. Returning to their fatherland, they carried with them the speech, the arts, and often the artisans of their proud nurse, and thus many existing remains, of apparently Roman architecture, are doubtless imitations of Roman buildings, erected by native potentates who had acquired a taste for Roman life on the banks of the Tiber.

* According to Stamm there once existed a translation of the whole of the Old Testament in that dialect.

words which furnish an inexhaustible material for development and culture, the *Moeso-Gothic* bears a certain resemblance to the Greek; while on the other hand, it is identified as a Germanic speech by the character of its radicals, almost all of which yet exist in the Teutonic languages, by its want of any verbal tenses but the present and the past, by the co-existence of a very complete system of vowel-changes in a strong, with a well-marked weak, order of inflection, and by general syntactical principles.*

The Scandinavian languages, the Swedish and Danish, and especially their common mother the Icelandic or Old-Northern, the Frisic—which, in some of its great multitude of dialects, perhaps more than any other language, resembles the English—the Dutch, and the German, particularly in the *Platt-Deutsch* or Low German form, are all of great value to the thorough etymological and grammatical study of our native tongue.

They are important, not so much as having largely contributed to the vocabulary or greatly influenced the grammatical structure of English, but because, in the poverty of accessible remains of Anglo-Saxon literature in different and especially in early stages of linguistic development, we do not possess satisfactory means of fully tracing the history of the Gothic portion of our language. There are very many English words and phrases whose forms show them to be Saxon, but which do not occur in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. These may generally be explained or elucidated by reference to the sister-tongues, and consequently some knowledge of them is almost as useful to the English student as Anglo-Saxon itself. I should unhesitatingly place the Icelandic at the head of these subsidiary philologies, because, from its close relationship to Anglo-Saxon, it furnishes more abundant analogies for the illustration of obscure English etymological and syntactical forms than any other of the cognate

* It is a question of curious interest whether those Crimean Goths, whom the Austrian ambassador, Busbequius, saw at Constantinople about the middle of the sixteenth century, and of whose vocabulary he has given us some scanty specimens in his fourth letter, were of *Moeso-Gothic* descent. It is difficult to account for their presence in that locality upon any other supposition, but the few words of their language left us by Busbequius do not enable us positively to determine to what branch of the Gothic stock their linguistic affinities would point.

tongues.* It is but recently that the great value of Icelandic philology has become known to the other branches of the Gothic stock, and one familiar with the treasures of that remarkable literature, and the wealth, power, and flexibility of the language which embodies it, sees occasion to regret the want of a thorough knowledge of it in English and American grammatical writers, more frequently than of any other attainment whatever.

French, of course, is of cardinal importance, both with reference to the history of our grammatical inflections, and as having contributed, though chiefly as a conduit, much more largely to our vocabulary than any other foreign source. The English words usually referred to a Latin original, have, in a large majority of cases, come to us through the French, and we have taken them with the modifications of orthography and meaning which our Norman neighbors had impressed upon them. The syntax of English, in its best estate, has been little affected by French influence, and few grammatical combinations of Romance origin have been permanently approved and employed by good English writers. Every Gallicism in syntax is presumably a corruption; but Norman French itself, as known to our ancestors, had been much modified by an infusion of the Scandinavian element, and therefore, forms of speech which we have borrowed from the French are sometimes referable, in the last resort, to a Gothic source.

I cannot speak of even Greek as being of any such value, in

* English philologists formerly ascribed perhaps too much to the Scandinavian Gothic as an element in the structure and composition of Anglo-Saxon, and more recent inquirers have erred as widely, in denying that early English was sensibly modified by the same influence. The dialects of Northern England, where the population partakes in greater proportion of Danish blood, show a large infusion of Scandinavian words and forms, and many of these have become incorporated into the general speech of Britain. The written Anglo-Saxon and Old-Northern certainly do not resemble each other so closely as to render it probable that they could have been mutually intelligible to those who spoke them; and we find that by the old Icelandic law the representatives of Englishmen dying in Iceland were expressly excluded from the right of inheritance, as foreigners, of an unknown speech, þeir menn er menn kunna eigi hær máli eðr túngu við. At the same time, it appears abundantly from the sagas that the Old-Northern was well understood among the higher circles in England, and the Icelandic skalds or bards were specially welcome at the English court.

reference to English grammar or etymology, as to make its acquisition a well-spent labor, unless it is pursued for other purposes than those of domestic philology. But that I may not be misunderstood, let me repeat that, so far from dissuading from the study of Greek as a branch of general education, I do but echo the universal opinion of all persons competent to pronounce on the subject, in expressing my own conviction that the language and literature of ancient Greece constitute the most efficient instrument of mental training ever enjoyed by man; and that a familiarity with that wonderful speech, its poetry, its philosophy, its eloquence, and the history it embalms, is incomparably the most valuable of intellectual possessions. The grammar of the Greek language is much more flexible, more tolerant of aberration, less rigid in its requirements, than the Latin. The *varium et mutabile semper femina*, of the Latin poet, for example, is so rare an instance of apparent want of concord, that it startles us as abnormal, while similar, and even wider grammatical discrepancies, are of constant occurrence in Greek. The precision which the regularity of Latin syntax gives to a period, the Greek more completely and clearly accomplishes by the nicety with which individual words are defined in meaning; and while the Latin trains us to be good grammarians, the Greek elevates us to the highest dignity of manhood, by making us acute and powerful thinkers.

Nothing could well have been more surprising than the discovery that the ancient Sanscrit exhibits unequivocal evidence of close relationship to the Greek and Latin, as well as to the modern Romance and the Gothic languages, in both grammar and vocabulary, and these analogies have served to establish a general alliance between a great number of tongues formerly supposed to be wholly unrelated. When linguistic science shall be farther advanced, the Sanscrit will probably in a great measure supersede the Latin as the common standard of grammatical comparison among the European tongues, with the additional advantage of standing much more nearly in one relation both to the Gothic and the Romance dialects. But at present, Sanscrit is accessible only to the fewest, and the English student can hardly be advised, as a general rule, to look beyond the sources from which our maternal speech is directly derived, for illustrations either of its

grammar or vocabulary. With respect to verbal forms, and points of grammatical structure not sufficiently explained by Anglo-Saxon, Latin, and French inflection and syntax, it may in general be said, that any one of the Gothic dialects will supply the deficiency, and if the inquirer's objects be limited to the actual use of his own tongue, the study of English authors is a better and safer guide than any wider researches in foreign philologies.*

* The American Senate and Bar have in my time been illustrated by four distinguished orators, all exceedingly remarkable, not only for argumentative and rhetorical power, but for an apparently exhaustive command of the utmost resources of their native tongue, which was with them all a never-ceasing subject of most careful study. They were all fair classical scholars, and all more or less acquainted with contemporaneous European literature, though I have reason to believe that not one of them was able to speak any language but his mother-tongue. I can hardly imagine that any amount of foreign linguistic study could have enabled either of them to use the speech of his fire-side with more consummate mastery, or that the English tongue could ever be spoken with more graceful, persuasive, or majestic accents.

LECTURE V.

STUDY OF EARLY ENGLISH.

THE systematic study of the mother-tongue, like that of all branches of knowledge which we acquire, to a sufficient extent for ordinary practical purposes, without study, is naturally very generally neglected. It is but lately that the English language has formed a part of the regular course of instruction at any of our higher seminaries, nor has it been made the subject of as zealous and thorough philological investigation by professed scholars, as have the German, the French, and some other living languages. It is a matter of doubt how far we are aided in acquiring the mastery of any spoken tongue by the study of scientific treatises; but however this may be, it is only very recently that we have had any really scientific treatises on the subject, any grammar which has attempted to serve at once as a philosophical exposition of the principles, and a guide to the actual employment of the English tongue. The complete history of the language,—the characterization of its periods, the critical elucidation of its successive changes, the full exhibition of its immediate and certain foreign relations as distinguished from its remote and presumptive affinities,—has never, to my knowledge, been undertaken.* While, therefore, for class instruction, and for many purposes of private study, there is no lack of text-books and other critical helps, yet a historical knowledge of English must be acquired by observing

* I am certainly not blind to the great importance and utility of the works of Latham, Fowler, Brown, and other learned and laborious inquirers into the facts and theory of English Grammar; but the consideration of their merits does not come within the scope of these lectures, the object of which is to recommend and enforce the study of English, not at second hand or through the medium of precept, but by a direct acquaintance with the great monuments of its literature.

its use and action as the living speech of the Anglican race in different centuries, not as its organization is demonstrated in the dissecting-room of the grammarian.

English is generally reputed to be among the more difficult of the great European languages, but it is hard for a native to say how far this opinion is well founded. The comparison of our own tongue with a foreign speech is attended with a good deal of difficulty. Particular phrases and constructions, of course, are easily enough set off against each other, but the general movement of our maternal language is too much a matter of unconscious, spontaneous action to be easily made objective, and, on the other hand, in foreign tongues we are too much absorbed in the individual phenomena to be able to grasp the whole field. The enginery of the one is too near, the idiomatic motive power of the other too distant, for distinct vision. But I am inclined to the belief, that English is more difficult than most of the Continental languages, at least as a spoken tongue, for I think it is certain that fewer natives *speak* it with elegance and accuracy, if indeed violations of grammatical propriety are not more frequent among the best English writers, and it sometimes happens that persons exact in the use of individual words are lax in the application of rules of syntactical construction. A distinguished British scholar of the last century said he had known but three of his countrymen who spoke their native language with uniform grammatical accuracy, and the observation of most persons widely acquainted with English and American society confirms the general truth implied in this declaration. Courier is equally severe upon the French. "There are," says that lively writer, "five or six persons in Europe who know Greek; those who know French are much fewer." *Primâ facie*, irregular as English is, we should expect it to be at least as correctly spoken as French, because the number of unrelated philological facts, of exceptions to what are said to be general rules, of anomalous and conventional phrases, is greater in the latter than in the former; but the proportion of good speakers, or rather of good talkers, is certainly larger among the French than among the English or Americans. It is interesting to observe how much value has been attached to purity of dialect in some of the less known countries of Europe. The grand old Catalan chronicler, Ramon Muntaner, who wrote about the year

1325, himself no book-worm, but a veteran *traineur de sabre*, more than once concludes his eulogiums of his heroes with a compliment to the propriety and elegance with which they spoke his native tongue, and he gives an interesting account of the means by which two of the nobility arrived at such perfection of speech. "And this same Syr Corral Llança grew up one of the fayrest menne in the world, and best langaged and sagest, insomuch that as at that tyme menne saide, the finest Cathalan in the worlde was hys and Syr Roger de Luria's; and no mervaille, for as yee have harde before, they came ryght yonge into Cathalonye and were norysshed there, and in alle the good townes of Cathalonie and of the reame of Valence whatsoever seemed to them choyce and faire langage, they dyd their endeavoure to learne the same. And so eche of hem was a more parfyt Cathalonian than alle other, and spake the fayrest Cathalan." *

The systematic cultivation of the modern Continental languages began much earlier than that of English. They had generally advanced to a high degree of development, and acquired the characteristic grammatical features which now distinguish them, at a period when even the most polished of the English dialects was but a patois. Several of them indeed had produced original works in both poetry and prose, which still rank among the master-pieces of modern genius, before Anglo-Norman England had given birth to a single composition which yet maintains an acknowledged place in the literature of the nation. Although Icelandic can hardly be called a modern language, yet it possesses, besides the poems and traditions of the heathen era, an original modern literature modified by the same general Christian influ-

* "E aquest En Corral Llança exi hu dells bells homens del mon, e mills pariant e pus saui, si que en aquell temps se deya, quel pus bell cathalanesch del mon era dell e del dit En Roger de Luria; e no era marauella, que ells, axi com dauant vos he dit, vengren molt fadrins en Cathalunya, e nudrirense de cascum lloch de Cathalunya e del regne de Valencia tot ço que bo ne bell parlar los paria ells aprengheren. E axi cascu dells fo lo pus perfet Cathala que negun altre, e ab pus bell cathalanesch."—Ramon Muntaner, 1562, cap. xviii.

The Catalan En, N', Na. the equivalent of the Castilian Don, Doña, and of the English Sir, Madam, is of disputed etymology, some holding it to be a mere locative particle corresponding to the French *De*, others, and I think with greater probability, considering it a remnant of the Latin *SENIOR*.

ences which have colored all the recent mental efforts of Europe. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries produced in that remote island poems of remarkable merit, and prose compositions which have no superiors in the narrative literature of any age. The *Nibelungen Lied*, the great epic of Germany, dates probably as far back as the year twelve hundred. Castilian, Catalan, Provençal, and French genius had already embodied themselves in poetic forms, which determined the character of the subsequent literatures of those languages, before the close of the thirteenth century, and the commencement of the fourteenth was marked by the appearance of Dante's great work, which still stands almost alone in the poetry, not of Italy only, but of modern Europe.

The later origin of English literature is to be ascribed partly to the fact that England, from its insular position, was less open to the exciting causes which roused to action the intellect of the continent, but chiefly, no doubt, to the condition of the language itself. The tongues of Iceland, of Germany, of Italy, of Spain, and in a less degree of France also, were substantially homogeneous in their etymology and structure, and the separate dialects of each stock, Gothic and Romance, were closely enough allied to facilitate the study of all of them to those to whom any one was vernacular, and thus to secure to them a great reciprocal philological and literary influence. The countries to which they belonged were also territorially and politically more or less connected, and thus an unbroken chain of social and literary action and reaction extended from the Arctic ocean to the Mediterranean.

English, on the contrary, was not only a composite speech, but built up of very discordant ingredients, and spoken in an isolated locality. The British islands had no relations of commerce or politics with any countries except Northern and Western France, Spain, and the comparatively unimportant Netherlandish provinces.* A longer period was naturally required for the assimilation

* The fear of wearying my audience by too frequent references to unfamiliar, foreign philologies, led me to omit to draw the special attention of my hearers to one of the richest sources of collateral illustration of early English. I mean the languages and literature of the Low Countries—Dutch and Flemish, (now become one by the adoption of a common orthography,) Frisian, and their numerous dialects. These languages, especially in their mediæval

of the constituents of the language, and for the action of the influences which, before that assimilation was completed, had already created the literatures of the Continental nations. In a country ruled by Norman princes, all governmental and aristocratic influences were unfavorable to the cultivation of the native speech and the growth of a national literature. The Romish church, too, in England as everywhere else, was hostile to all intellectual effort which in any degree diverged from the path marked out by ecclesiastical habit and tradition, and very many important English benefices were held by foreign priests quite ignorant of the English tongue. Robert of Gloucester, who flourished about two hundred years after the conquest, says :

Wyllam, þys noble duc, þo he adde ydo al þys,
 þen wey he nome to Londone he & al hys
 As kyng & prince of lond, wyþ nobleye ynou.
 Agen hym wyþ vayre processyon þat folc of town drou,
 And vnderuonge hym vayre ynou, as kyng of þys lond.
 þus come lo ! Engeland into Normannes honde,
 And þe Normans ne couþe speke þo bote her owe speche,
 And speke French as dude atom & here chyl dren dude al so techs.
 So þat hey men of þys lond, þat of her blod come,
 Holdeþ alle þulke speche, þat hii of hem nome.
 Vor bote a man couþe French, me tolþ of hym wel lute.
 Ac lowe men holdeþ to Englyss, & to her kunde speche yute.
 Ich wene þer ne be man in world contreyes none,
 þat ne holdeþ to her kunde speche, bote Engeland one,
 Ac wol me wot vorto conne bothe wel yt ys
 Vor þe more þat a man con, þe more worþ he ys.*

And in the following century, as we learn from an old chronicler, "John Cornewaile, a maister of grammar, changed the lore in grammar scole, and construction, of Frenche into Engliche : so that now, the year of our Lord a thousand three hundred and 4 score and five, and of the seconde Kyng Richard after the conquest nyne, in alle the grammar scoles of Engeland children leueth Frensche, and construeth and lerneth on Engliche."

forms, have long been a favorite study with me, and constitute an almost unwrought mine of valuable information respecting the early history of our own tongue. English students have hitherto almost wholly neglected Netherlandish literature and philology, and even the more Catholic scholarship of Germany has generally treated them with indifference if not with contempt.

* Robert of Gloucester, p. 364.

Under such circumstances, it is by no means strange that the progress of the language and literature of England should have been slow, and it is matter of surprise that the fourteenth century should have left so noble monuments of English genius, rather than that the literary memorials of that era should be so few. But, although the long reign of Edward III. was as remarkable for the splendid first-fruits of a great national literature as for its political and martial triumphs and reverses, the language was not at that time sufficiently cleared of dialectic confusion, and sufficiently settled in its forms and syntax, to admit of grammatical and critical treatment as a distinctly organized speech. While, therefore, the thirteenth century produced in Iceland a learned and complete treatise on the poetic art as suited to the genius of the Old-Northern tongue,* and Jacme March, a contemporary of Chaucer, had composed a Catalan vocabulary and dictionary of rhymes, with metrical precepts and examples, the English had not even a dictionary or grammar, still less critical treatises, until a much later period. It will be evident from all this, that the remains of the English speech, in its earliest forms, as a *literary* medium, must be relatively few, and that it is by no means easy to trace the progress of changes which ended in the substitution of our present piebald dialect for the comparatively homogeneous and consistent Saxon tongue. A language which exists, for centuries, only as the jargon of an unlettered peasantry and a despised race, will preserve but few memorials of its ages of humiliation, and as I have before noticed, the indifference with which English philology has hitherto been so generally regarded has suffered to perish, or still withholds from the public eye, a vast amount of material which might have been employed for the elucidation of many points of great historical, literary, and linguistic interest. Halliwell's Dictionary, containing more than fifty thousand archaic and provincial words and obsolete forms, is illustrated with citations drawn in the largest proportion from unpublished manuscript authorities, and it is evident from the titles of the works quoted and the character of the extracts, as well as from the testimony of scholars, that many of them must be of very great philological value.†

* The prose Edda, or Edda of Snorri Sturluson.

† Until very lately, the modernization of every reprint of an English classic

I have already sufficiently stated my reasons for believing that a colloquial or grammatical knowledge of other tongues is not essential to the comprehension and use of our own, and, considered solely as a means to that end, without reference to the immense value of classical and modern Continental literature as the most powerful of all instruments of general culture, I have no doubt whatever that the study of the Greek and Latin languages might be advantageously replaced by that of the Anglo-Saxon and primitive English. An overwhelming proportion of the words which make up our daily speech is drawn from Anglo-Saxon roots, and our syntax is as distinctly and as generally to be traced to the

was almost as much a settled practice as the adoption of a fashionable style of binding. Dryden, Pope, and Wordsworth have not scrupled to lay a profane hand upon Chaucer, a mightier genius than either; and Milton is not allowed to appear in the orthography which he deliberately and systematically employed. Archbishop Parker was so zealous for the preservation, or rather the restoration, of ancient forms, that he printed even the Latin of Asser's life of Alfred in the Anglo-Saxon character. The Association which takes its name from Parker, in republishing the English theological writings of the sixteenth century—a series extending to more than fifty volumes, and which, unmutilated, would have been invaluable as a treasure of genuine, primitive, nervous English—has clipped and restamped the whole in such a manner as to deprive these works of all their interest, except for professional theological inquirers, and very greatly to diminish their value even for them. The recently discovered manuscript of the Earl of Devonshire's translation of Paleario's Treatise on the Benefits of Christ's Death is evidently a copy made by an ignorant transcriber, and its orthography is extremely incorrect and variable. In preparing it for the press, it was, unfortunately, deemed expedient to reform the spelling, for the sake of making it more uniform and intelligible as well as more correct, and the task has been executed with great care, and in as good faith as the erroneous principle adopted would admit of. As a frontispiece, a fac-simile of one of the very small pages of the manuscript is given, containing eighteen lines, or about one hundred and twenty-five words. In printing the text of this page, the editor has omitted a comma in the seventh line, and thereby changed, or at least obscured, the meaning of a very important and very clear passage which contained the marrow of the whole treatise. Of course, any departure from the letter in a weighty period, unless it is supposed to be a mere typographical accident, destroys the confidence of critical readers in the edition, and the book, in a grammatical point of view, becomes worthless. The manuscript in question is one of the most important recent acquisitions to the theology of the Reformation and the early literature of England, and the voluntary admission of any changes in its text shows a want of exact scholarship in a quarter where we had the best right to expect it.

same source. We are not then to regard the ancient Anglican speech as in any sense a foreign tongue, but rather as a chrysalis form of our own, wherein we may find direct and clear explanation of many grammatical peculiarities of modern English, which the study of the Continental languages, ancient or modern, can but imperfectly elucidate. With reference to etymology, the importance of Anglo-Saxon is too obvious to require argument. It is fair to admit, however, that the etymology of compound words, and of abstract and figurative terms, must in general be sought elsewhere; for we have borrowed our scientific, metaphysical, and æsthetical phraseology from other sources, while the vocabulary of our material life is almost wholly of native growth. In determining the signification of words, modern usage is as binding an authority as ancient practice, inasmuch as, at present, we know no ground but use for either the old meaning or the new; but a knowledge of the primitive sense of a word very often enables us to discover a force and fitness in its modern applications which we had never suspected before, and accordingly to employ it with greater propriety and appositeness. The most instructive and impressive etymologies are those which are pursued within the limits of our own tongue. The native word at every change of form and meaning exhibits new domestic relations, and suggests a hundred sources of collateral inquiry and illustration, while the foreign root connects itself with our philology only by remote and often doubtful analogies, and when it enters our language, it comes usually in a fixed form, and with a settled meaning, neither of which admits of further development, and of course the word has no longer a history.

The knowledge of Anglo-Saxon is important as a corrective of the philological errors into which we may be led by the study of early English, and especially of popular ballad and other poetry, without such a guide. The introduction of Norman French, with a multitude of words inflected in the weak or augmentative manner, naturally confused what was sufficiently intricate and uncertain before, namely, the strong inflection, or that by letter-change, in the Anglo-Saxon. The range of letter-change in Anglo-Saxon grammar was indeed wide, but not unlimited or arbitrary. It however became so, at least in the poetic dialect, as soon as Norman influence had taught English bards independence of the laws

of Saxon grammar. Many of the barbarous forms so freely used in popular verse are neither obsolete conjugations revived, nor dialectic peculiarities, but creations of the rhymesters who employed them, coin not uncurrent merely, by counterfeit, and without either the stamp or the ring of the genuine metal. The balladmongers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries concerned themselves as little about a vowel as the Orientals, and where the convenience of rhyme or metre required a heroic license, they needed only the consonants of one syllable of a genuine root as a stock whereon to grow any conceivable variety of termination.* Although they did not hesitate to conjugate a weak verb with a strong inflection, or to reverse the process, thus adding or subtracting syllables at pleasure, yet their boldest liberties were with the letter-change in the strong inflection. We cannot indeed hold them guilty of corrupting

the language of the nation
With long-tailed words in -osity and -ation ;

but we can fairly convict them of making it more desperately Gothic in its forms than even the Mæso-Gothic of Ulphilas.

The confusion into which the English inflections were thus thrown combined with other circumstances to discourage the attempts of philologists to reduce its accidentence to a regular system, and English scholars had shown very respectable ability in the elucidation of other tongues, before they produced any thing that could fairly be called a grammar of their own. Analogous causes had prevented the cultivation of native philology in Northern France, and though the langue d'oc, or Provençal, was early a matter of careful study, the langue d'oïl, the only

* If it were not irreverent in an American to present even the boy-life of Washington in a ludicrous or familiar light, I would refer to the Harvard poetical version of Weems's story of the Cherry-tree, as a fair and scarcely exaggerated imitation of the verbal extravagances of early English and Scottish ballad-makers. The vowel changes, *gus* for *gave*, *sin* for *son*, *Washington* for *Washington*, are made for the sake of rhyme and not in accordance with any phonetic law, and they may all be paralleled in genuine old ballads that have been quoted as evidences of the condition of the vernacular English language two or three centuries since. They are, for the most part, mere poetical licenses which belong to the category of expressions *lego solutis*.

French dialect known to the Norman race, possessed no grammar until it was provided with one by an Englishman.*

The function of grammar is to teach what is, not what the grammarian thinks ought to be, the best usage in language. English, as I have said, was too irregular fluctuating, and incongruous in its accidence and syntax to be reduced to form and order until the close of the sixteenth century, and as its literature was of later origin than that of the continent there was not, before that period, a sufficient accumulation of classical authorship to serve as illustration and authority in grammatical discussion.†

* The French grammar of Palsgrave, to which I allude, prepared for the use of the Princess Mary, sister of King Henry VIII., and printed in 1580, under the title of *Lesclaircissement de la Langue Francoyse*, is, under the circumstances, the most remarkable, if not the most important, work which had appeared in modern philology before the commencement of the present century. Although it was designed only to teach French grammar, yet, as it is written in English, and constantly illustrates the former tongue by comparison with the latter, it is hardly a less valuable source of instruction with reference to the native than to the foreign language. In the careful reprint lately executed at the expense of the French government, it makes a large quarto of 900 pp., more than half of which is occupied with comparative tables of words and phrases, so that while it is a remarkably complete French grammar, it is much the fullest English dictionary which existed before the time of Elizabeth. It is also one of the amplest collections of English phrases and syntactical combinations which can be found at the present day, and at the same time the best authority now extant for the pronunciation used in French, and, so far it goes, in English also, at the period when it was written.

† One of the earliest English grammars which can lay claim to scientific merit is the brief compend drawn up by Ben Jonson, and published some time after the death of the author. It is too meagre to convey much positive instruction, but it exhibits enough of philological insight to excite serious regret for the loss of Jonson's complete work, the manuscript of which was destroyed by fire. This little treatise throws a good deal of light on the orthoepy of English at that period, for the learning and the habitual occupations of Jonson make it authoritative on this point, so far as it goes, but there are statements concerning the accidence, which are not supported by the general usage of the best authors, either of Jonson's own time, or of any preceding age of English literature. For instance, he lays down the rule that nouns in *z*, *s*, *sh*, *g*, and *ch*, make the possessive singular in *'s*, and the plural in *'s*, and as an example he cites the word *prince*, (which, by the way, does not end in either of the terminations enumerated by him,) and says the possessive case is *princ's*, the plural *princes*. That individual instances of this orthography may be met with, I do not deny, but it is certain that it never was the general usage, and Jonson was doubtless suggesting a theory, not declaring a fact, and he introduces the rule rather as furnishing an explanation of what he calls the "mon-

The same reasons which deterred early English scholars from laying down rules of grammatical inflection, would render it impossible at the present day to construct a regular accidence of the forms of the language at any period before the writers of the Elizabethan age had established standards of conjugation, declension, orthography, and syntax. The English student therefore can expect little help from grammarians in mastering the literature of earlier periods, and he must learn the system of each great writer by observation of his practice. But the inflections in English are so few, that the number of possible variations in their form is embraced within a very narrow range, and all their discrepancies together do not amount to so great a number as the regular changes in most other languages. With respect to the vocabulary, the difficulties are even less. Most good editions of old authors are provided with glossaries explaining the obsolete words, and where these are wanting, the dictionaries of Nares, Halliwell, Wright, and others, amply supply the deficiency. In fact, a mere fraction of the time demanded to acquire the most superficial smattering of French or Italian will enable the student to obtain such a knowledge of early English, that he can read with facility every thing written in the language, from the period when it assumed a distinct form to its complete development in the seventeenth century. Full critical discussions of the literary

strous syntax," of using the pronoun *his* as the sign of the possessive case, than as a guide to actual practice.

It is curious that Palsgrave lays down the same rule, though he elsewhere contradicts it, and in practice disregards it. "Also where as we seme to have a genityve case, for so moche as, by adding of *is* to a substanyve, we sygnifye possessyon, as, my maister*is* gowne, my lady*is* boke, which with us contrevailleth as moche as the gowne of my maister, the boke of my ladye," etc. Introduction, XL.

But on page 191, he says :

"Where we, in our tonge, use to putte *s* to oure substanyves whan we wyl express possessyon, saying, 'a mannes gowne, a woman [*s*] hose,' etc., etc., and afterwards, 'this is my maisters gowne, he dyd fette his maisters cloke.'" A similar passage occurs on page 141, and I have not observed a single instance where Palsgrave himself makes the possessive in *is*, except that above quoted from page XL., where it is used by way of exemplifying the rule as he states it.

Alexander Gil's remarkable *Logonomia Anglica* is interesting rather in an orthoepical, than in a grammatical point of view, and it will be particularly noticed in a Lecture on orthoepical changes in English, *post*.

merit of English authors would be foreign to the plan of the present course, and in noticing writers of different periods, I shall refer chiefly to their value as sources of philological instruction. First in time, and not least in importance, is the *Ormulum*, a very good edition of which was published in 1852. This is a metrical paraphrase of a part of the New Testament, in a homiletic form, and it probably belongs to the early part of the thirteenth century. Its merit consists mainly in the purity of its Saxon-English, very few words of foreign origin occurring in it. The uniformity of its orthography, and the regularity of its inflections, are far greater than are to be found in the poetical compositions even of the best writers of the succeeding century. One reason of this is that the unrhymed versification adopted by the author relieved him from the necessity of varying the terminal syllables of his words for the sake of rhyme, which led to such anomalous inflections in other poetical compositions, and it accordingly exhibits the language in the most perfect form of which it was then capable. In fact, the dialect of the *Ormulum* is more easily mastered than that of *Piers Ploughman*, which was written more than a century later, and it contains fewer words of unknown or doubtful signification. It is, moreover, especially interesting as a specimen of the character and inherent tendencies of the Anglo-Saxon language as affected by more advanced civilization and culture, but still uncorrupted by any considerable mixture of foreign ingredients; for we discover no traces of the Norman element in the vocabulary, and but few in the syntax of this remarkable work.* *Piers Ploughman*, on the contrary, employs Latin and French words in quite as large a proportion as Chaucer,† although the forms and syntax of the latter author are much nearer the modern standard. The compliment which Spenser bestows upon Chaucer's "Well of English undefiled" is indeed well merited, if reference is had to

* The vocabulary of the *Ormulum* consists of about twenty-three hundred words, exclusive of proper names and inflected forms. Among these I am unable to find a single word of Norman-French origin, and scarcely ten which were taken directly from the Latin. The whole number of words of foreign etymology previously introduced into Anglo-Saxon, which occur in the *Ormulum*, does not exceed sixty, though there is some uncertainty as to the origin of several words common to the Latin and the Gothic languages in the earliest stages in which these latter are known to us.—See Lecture vi.

† See Lecture vi.

the composite character that English assumed in the best ages of its literature, but it would be more fitly applied to the *Ormulum*, as a repository of the indigenous vocabulary of the Anglican tongue. In any event, no student of the works of Chaucer will dispute Spenser's opinion that

“ In him the pure well-head of poesy did dwell,”

and it is no extravagant praise to say that the name of Chaucer was the first in English literature, until it was, not eclipsed, but surpassed by those of Shakespeare and Milton.*

In the earliest ages of all literature, poetry seems to be little more than an artificial arrangement of the dialect of common life, but as literary culture advances, both the phraseology and the grammar of metrical compositions diverge from the vulgar speech, and poetry forms a vocabulary and a syntax of its own. Although, therefore, the practice of great poetical writers is authority for their successors, yet it is by no means trustworthy evidence as to the actual character of the language employed by speakers or prose writers,† and this is more emphatically true of the English than of most Continental languages, in consequence of the derangement of its flexional system which I have already noticed.

The dialect of Chaucer doubtless approaches to the court language of his day, but the prose of Wycliffe is more nearly the familiar speech of the English heart in the reign of Edward III., and the pages of Holinshed more truly reflect the living language of Queen Elizabeth's time than do the stanzas of Spenser.

The English prose literature of the fifteenth century consists, in large proportion, of translations, and these always partake more or less of the color of the sources from which they were taken. There is, in fact, so little native English of that period extant in a printed form, that it is not easy to determine how far the prevalence of Gallicisms in the translations printed by Caxton is to be

* I am aware that Chaucer's poems are in great part translations, paraphrases, or imitations. But this was the habit of the time. Every man built on the foundation of his predecessors, and Chaucer, while he touched nothing which he did not improve, is always best when he is most original in the conception as well as the treatment of his theme.

† Nos consuetudine [loquendi] prohibemur; poeta jus suum tenuit et dixit audacius. CICERO, *Tusc. Disp.* III. 9.

ascribed to the influence of French originals upon the style of the translator, and how far it was a characteristic feature of the language of the time. The same remark applies, though with much less force, to Lord Berners' admirable translation of Froissart, the two volumes of which were published in 1523 and 1525 respectively; but this translation is doubtless the best English prose style which had yet appeared, and as a specimen of picturesque narrative, it is excelled by no production of later periods. The dramatic character and familiar gossiping tone of the original allowed some license of translation, and the dialogistic style of the English of Lord Berners is as racy, and nearly as idiomatic, as the French of Froissart.

Tyndale's translation of the New Testament is the most important philological monument of the first half of the sixteenth century, perhaps I should say of the whole period between Chaucer and Shakespeare, both as a historical relic and as having, more than any thing else, contributed to shape and fix the sacred dialect and to establish the form which the Bible must permanently assume in an English dress. The best features of the translation of 1611 are derived from the version of Tyndale, and thus that remarkable work has exerted, directly and indirectly, a more powerful influence on the English language than any other single production between the ages of Richard II. and Queen Elizabeth.*

The most important remaining prose works of the sixteenth century are the writings of Sir Thomas More,† (which, however, with all their excellence, are rather specimens of what the language in its best estate then was, than actually influential models of composition,) and those of Hooker. These last, indeed, are not remarkable as originating new forms or combinations of words, but they embody nearly all the real improvements which had been made, and they may be considered as exhibiting a structure of English not equalled by the style of any earlier writer, and scarcely surpassed by that of any later.

I shall reserve what I have to say upon the dialect of the authorized English version of the Bible for another occasion, and it would be superfluous to commend to the study of the inquirer such authors as Bacon, and Shakespeare, and Milton. There are,

* See Lecture xxviii.

† See Lecture vi.

however, two or three classes of writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, whose works are much less known than their philological importance deserves. First, are what we must call, in relation to Shakespeare, and only in relation to him, the *minor* dramatists of the period in question. They are valuable, not only as perhaps the best authorities upon the actual spoken dialect of their age, but as genuine expressions of the character and tendencies of contemporaneous English humanity, and also for the aid they afford in the illustration and elucidation of Shakespeare himself, whose splendor has so completely filled the horizon of his art, that those feebler lights can hardly yet be said to have enjoyed the benefit of a heliacal rising.

Next come the early English translators of the great monuments of Greek and Roman literature. The reigns of Elizabeth and James produced a large number of translations of classical authors, as for example the Lives and the Morals of Plutarch, the Works of Seneca, the History of Livy, the Natural History of the Elder Pliny, and other voluminous works. These translations are naturally more or less tinctured with un-English classical idioms, but the vast range of subjects discussed in them, especially in Plutarch and Pliny, demanded the employment of almost the entire native vocabulary, and we find in these works exemplifications of numerous words and phrases which scarcely occur at all in any other branch of the literature of that important period.

For the same reasons, the early voyages and travels, such as the voluminous collections of Hakluyt and Purchas, as well as the separately published works of this class are very valuable sources of philological knowledge. Their vocabularies are very varied and extensive, and they are rendered especially attractive by the life and fervor which, at a period when all that was foreign to Europe was full of wonder and mystery, clothed in almost poetic forms the narratives of events, and descriptions of scenery and objects, now almost too familiar to excite a momentary curiosity. Hakluyt is perhaps to be preferred to Purchas, because he allows the narrators whose reports he collected to speak for themselves, and appears in general to follow the words of the original journals more closely than Purchas, who often abridges, or otherwise modifies, his authorities.

The theological productions of the period between the reigns of Elizabeth and Anne, however eloquent and powerful, are, simply as philological monuments, less important than the secular compositions of the same century, and they furnish not many examples of verbal form or combination which are not even more happily employed elsewhere. To these remarks, however, the works of Fuller are an exception. Among the writers of that age, Fuller and Sir Thomas Browne come nearest to Shakespeare and Milton in affluence of thought and wealth of poetic sentiment and imagery. They are both remarkable for a wide range of vocabulary, Fuller inclining to a Saxon, Browne to a Latinized diction, and their syntax is marked by the same peculiarities as their nomenclature.

The interest which attaches to the literature of the eighteenth century is more properly of a critical and rhetorical than of a linguistic character; and, besides, in remarks which are intended to draw the attention of my hearers to unfamiliar rather than to every-day fields of study, it would be unprofitable to discuss the literary importance of Dryden, Pope, Swift, Addison, Johnson, Junius, Gibbon, and Burke.

I must, for similar reasons, refrain from entering upon the literature of our own times, and I shall only refer to a single author, who has made himself conspicuous as, in certain particulars, an exceedingly exact and careful writer. In point of thorough knowledge of the meaning, and constant and scrupulous precision in the use, of individual words, I suppose Coleridge surpasses all other English writers of whatever period. His works are of great philological value, because they compel the reader to a minute study of his nomenclature, and a nice discrimination between words which he employs in allied, but still distinct senses, and they contribute more powerfully than the works of any other English author to habituate the student to that close observation of the meaning of words which is essential to precision of thought and accuracy of speech. Few writers so often refer to the etymology of words as a means of ascertaining, defining, or illustrating their meaning, while, at the same time, mere etymology was not sufficiently a passion with Coleridge to be likely to mislead him.*

* Though Coleridge is a high authority with respect to the meaning of

LECTURE VI.

SOURCES AND COMPOSITION OF ENGLISH.

I.

THE heterogeneous character of our vocabulary, and the consequent obscurity of its etymology, have been noticed as circumstances which impose upon the student of English an amount of labor not demanded for the attainment of languages whose stock of words is derived, in larger proportion, from obvious and familiar roots. I now propose to give some account of the sources and composition of the English language. According to the views of many able philologists, comparison of grammatical structure is a surer test of radical linguistic affinity, than resemblances between the words which compose vocabularies. I shall not here discuss the soundness of this doctrine, my present object being to display the acquisitions of the Anglican tongue, and to indicate the quarters from which they have been immediately derived, not to point out its ethnological relationships. I shall therefore on this

single words, his style is by no means an agreeable or even a scrupulously correct one, in point of structure and syntax. Among other minor matters I shall notice hereafter (Lecture xxix.), his improper, or at least very questionable, use of the phrase *in respect of*, and I will here observe, that in opposition to the practice of almost every good writer from the Saxon period to his own, and to the rule given by Ben Jonson as well as all later grammarians, he employs the affirmative *or* after the negative alternative *neither*; as *neither this or that*. In this innovation, he has had few if any followers. Again, he uses *both*, not exclusively as a dual, but as embracing three or more objects. I am aware that in this latter case he had the example of Ascham and some other early authors, but it is contrary to the etymological meaning of the word, and to the constant usage of the best English writers. I do not think that any of these departures from the established construction were accidental. They were attempts at arbitrary reform, and though the last of them may be defended on the ground that dual forms are purely grammatical subtleties, and ought to be discarded, they will all probably fail to secure general adoption in English syntax.

occasion confine myself to the vocabulary, dismissing inquiry into the grammatical character of the language, with the simple remark, that it in general corresponds with that of the other dialects of the Gothic stock. In structure, English, though shorn of its inflections, is still substantially Anglo-Saxon, and it owes much the largest part of its words to the same source.

There are two modes of estimating the relative amount of words derived from different sources in a given language. The one is to compute the etymological proportions of the entire vocabulary, as exhibited in the fullest dictionaries; the other, to observe the proportions in which words of indigenous and of foreign origin respectively occur in actual speech and in written literature. Both modes of computation must be employed in order to arrive at a just appreciation of the vocabulary; but, for ordinary purposes, the latter method is the most important, because words tend to carry their native syntax with them, and grammatical structure usually accords more nearly with that of the source from which the mass of the words in daily use is taken, than with the idiom of languages whose contributions to the speech are fewer in number and of rarer occurrence. Besides this, all dictionaries contain many words which are employed only in special or exceptional cases, and which may be regarded as foreign denizens not yet entitled to the rights of full citizenship. At the same time, the method in question is a very difficult mode of estimation, because, not to speak of the peculiar diction of individual writers, every subject, every profession, and to some extent, every locality, has its own nomenclature, and it is often impossible to decide how far those special vocabularies can claim to form a part of the general stock.

Upon the whole, we may say that English, as understood and employed by the great majority of those who speak it, or, in other words, that portion of the language which is not restricted to particular callings or places, but is common to all intelligent natives, is derived from Anglo-Saxon, Latin, and French. Neither its vocabulary nor its structure possesses any important characteristic features which may not be traced directly to one of these sources, although the number of individual words which we have borrowed from other quarters is still very considerable.* Dean Trench

* This general statement must be qualified by the admission that certain

makes this general estimate of the relative proportions between the different elements of English: "Suppose the English language to be divided into a hundred parts; of these, to make a rough distribution, sixty would be Saxon, thirty would be Latin, including of course the Latin which has come to us through the French, five would be Greek; we should then have assigned ninety-five parts, leaving the other five, perhaps too large a residue, to be divided among all the other languages, from which we have adopted isolated words." This estimate, of course, applies to the total vocabulary, as contained in the completest dictionaries. Sharon Turner gives extracts from fifteen classical English authors, beginning with Shakespeare and ending with Johnson, for the purpose of comparing the proportion of Saxon words used by these authors respectively. These extracts have often been made a basis for estimates of the proportion of English words in actual use derived from foreign sources, but they are by no means sufficiently extensive to furnish a safe criterion. The extracts consist of only a period or two from each author, and a few of them extend beyond a hundred words; none of them, I believe, beyond a hundred and fifty. The results deduced from them are, as would be naturally supposed, erroneous; but, such as they are, they have been too generally adopted to be passed without notice, and they are given in a note at the foot of the page.* In order to arrive

grammatical forms adopted in Northern England from the Danish colonists passed into the literary dialect, and finally became established modes of speech in English. I have known one American family in which the Danish verb *at lakke* was in familiar use, and they commonly said 'it lacks towards ten o'clock,' for 'it is near ten o'clock,' which is precisely equivalent to the Danish *det lakker mod ti*. The family could give no explanation of the origin of the phrase.

* The most convenient and intelligible method of stating the results is by the numerical percentage of words from different sources in the extracts referred to in the text; according to these,—

Shakespeare uses	85 per cent.	of Anglo-Saxon,	15 of other words.
Milton	" 81 "	"	19 "
Cowley	" 89 "	"	11 "
English Bible	" 97 "	"	8 "
Thomson	" 85 "	"	15 "
Addison	" 88 "	"	17 "
Spenser	" 81 "	"	19 "
Locke	" 80 "	"	20 "
Pope	" 76 "	"	24 "
Young	" 79 "	"	21 "

at satisfactory conclusions on this point, more thorough and extensive research is necessary. I have subjected much longer extracts from several authors to a critical examination, and the results I am about to state are in all cases founded, not upon average estimates from the comparison of scattered passages, but upon actual enumeration.* In writers whose style is nearly uniform, I have endeavored to select characteristic portions as a basis for computation; in others, whose range of subject and variety of expression is wide, I have compared their different styles with

Swift	uses 89 per cent. of Anglo-Saxon, 11 of other words.
Robertson	“ 68 “ “ “ 82 “
Hume	“ 65 “ “ “ 85 “
Gibbon	“ 58 “ “ “ 42 “
Johnson	“ 75 “ “ “ 25 “

A comparison of these results, derived from single paragraphs containing from sixty or seventy to a hundred and fifty words, with those which I have deduced from the examination of different passages from the same and other authors, each extending to several thousand words, will show that conclusions based on data so insignificant in amount as those given by Turner, are entitled to no confidence whatever. The extract from Swift contains ninety words, ten of which, or eleven per cent., Turner marks as foreign, leaving eighty-nine per cent. of Anglo-Saxon. Now this is a *picked* sentence, for in the John Bull, as thoroughly English a performance as any of Swift's works, the foreign words are in the proportion of at least fifteen per cent.; in his History of the four last years of Queen Anne, twenty-eight per cent.; in his Political Lying, more than thirty per cent.; and in this latter work, many passages of considerable length may be found, where the words of foreign etymology amount to forty per cent. On the other hand, Ruskin, in his theoretical discussions, often employs twenty-five or even thirty per cent. of Latin derivatives, but in the first six periods of the sixth Exercise in his Elements of Drawing, containing one hundred and eight words, all but *two*, namely, *pale* and *practice*, are Anglo-Saxon. My own comparisons, though embracing more than two hundred times the quantity of literary material examined by Turner, are still insufficient in variety and amount, and in discrimination of classes of and character of words, to establish any more precise conclusion than the general one stated in a following page, namely that the authors of the present day use more Anglo-Saxon words, proportionally, than do writers of corresponding eminence in the last century.

* I have made no attempt to determine the etymological proportions of our entire verbal stock, because I believe no dictionary contains more than two-thirds, or at most three-fourths, of the words which make up the English language. Dictionaries are made from books, and for readers of books, and they all omit a vast array of words, chiefly Saxon, which belong to the arts and to the humbler fields of life, and which have not yet found their way into literary circles.

reference to the effect produced upon them by difference of matter and of purpose. I have been able to examine the total vocabularies only of the Ormulum, the English Bible, Shakespeare, and the poetical works of Milton, because these are the only English books to which I can find complete verbal indexes. In these instances, the comparison of the entire stock of words possessed, and the proportions habitually used by the writers, is full of interest and instruction, and I regret that leisure and means were not afforded for making similar inquiries respecting the vocabularies of a larger number of eminent authors near our own time. In all cases, proper names are excluded from the estimates, but in computing the etymological proportions of the words *used in the extracts examined*, all other words, of whatever grammatical class, and all repetitions of the same words, are counted. Thus, in the passage extending from the end of the period in verse 362 of the sixth book of Paradise Lost, to the end of the period in verse 372, there are seventy-two words. Eight of these are proper names and are rejected, but all the other words are counted, though several of them are repetitions of particles and pronouns. In the comparison of the *total vocabularies, every part of speech* is counted as a distinct word, but all the inflected forms of a given verb or adjective are treated as composing a single word. Thus, *safe, safely, safety*, and *save*, I make four words, but *save, saved, and saving*, one, as also *safe, safer, safest*, one.

I have made no attempt to assign words not of Anglo-Saxon origin to their respective sources, but it may be assumed in general that Greek words, except the modern scientific compounds, have come to us through the Latin, and both in this case and where they have been formed directly from Greek roots, their orthography is usually conformed to the Latin standard for similar words. Words of original Latin etymology have been, as will be more fully shown in a future lecture, in the great majority of instances, borrowed by us from French, and are still used in forms more in accordance with the French than with the Latin orthography. The proportion, five per cent., allowed by Trench to Greek words, I think too great, as is also that for other miscellaneous etymologies, unless we follow the Celtic school in referring to a Celtic origin all roots common to that and the Gothic dialects.

Taking the authors I have examined chronologically, I find, with respect to their *total vocabularies*, that in that of the Ormulum (which though written probably not far from the year 1225, I consider, in opposition to the opinion of most philologists, as English rather than as semi-Saxon), nearly ninety-seven per cent. of the words are Anglo-Saxon.* In the vocabulary of the Eng-

* With the exception of a very few Latin terms, such as *quadriga*, *vipera*, &c., I have observed in the Ormulum no word of foreign etymology which had not been employed by Anglo-Saxon writers, and thus naturalized while Anglo-Saxon was still a living speech. There is a considerable class of Saxon words, some of them very important with reference to the question of the moral culture of the people, the source and etymology of which it is difficult to determine. *Law* and *right*, for example, are by many etymologists derived respectively from the Latin *lex* and *rectus*. It is said that *lagu* and *lah* do not occur in Anglo-Saxon before the reign of Edgar, A.D. 959-975. But *lagu* bears the same relation to the Saxon verb *lecgan*, to *lay*, to *set down*, that the German *Gesetz* does to the verb *setzen*. The Mæso-Gothic *lagjan* is the equivalent of *lecgan*, and though no noun etymologically corresponding to *law* occurs in the slender remains we possess of that literature, yet a similar word is found in Old-Northern as well as in Swedish and Danish. We have in the eighteenth stanza of the *Völo-spá*, one of the oldest poems of the Edda, *þær lagv lagvdo*, they enacted statutes, laid down the law. We cannot well doubt that *lagv* and *lagvdo* are related words, and it is not denied that the verb, as well as its cognates in the sister tongues, is of primitive Gothic origin. We find in the Saxon Chronicle MLXXXVII., an expression very similar to that quoted above from the Edda, and in near connection with it the verb *settan* in the same sense as the Ger. *setzen*, to appoint or decree: "He sætte mycel deorfrið, and he lægde laga þær wið, þat swa hwa swa sloge heort oððe hinde, þat hine man sceolde blendian. * * Eac he sætte be þam haran, þat hi mosten freo faran."

I know not why we should question the etymological relationship between *lægde* and *laga*, and if these words are connected, there is no reason for going to the Latin for the derivation of *law*.

Jornandes, who wrote in the sixth century, has a word apparently from the same root, and even approximating to our *by-law*: *Nam ethicam eas erudit, ut barbaricos mores ab eis compeceret; physicam tradens naturaliter propriis legibus vivere fecit, quas usque nunc conscriptas bellagines* (Ihre, and some others, read, *bilagines*) nuncupant.—*De Reb. Get. cap. xi.*

Right is found not only in Anglo-Saxon (*riht*), but in all the cognate languages, and it is certainly improbable that the Mæso-Goths of the fourth century borrowed from the Latin *rectus* their *rihts*, *right*, *just*, and *garaihts*, *righteous*, which, with several derivatives from them, are used by Ulphilas.

We are, therefore, entitled to consider *law* and *right*, and all their deriva-

lish Bible, sixty per cent. are native ; in that of Shakespeare the proportion is very nearly the same ; while of the stock of words employed in the poetical works of Milton, less than thirty-three per cent. are Anglo-Saxon.

But when we examine the proportions in which authors actually employ the words at their command, we find that, even in those whose total vocabulary embraces the greatest number of Latin and other foreign vocables, the Anglo-Saxon still largely predominates. Thus :

Robert of Gloster, narrative of Conquest, pp. 354, 364, employs of Anglo-Saxon words,	Ninety-six per cent.
Piers Ploughman, Introduction, entire,	Eighty-eight per cent.
“ Passus Decimus-Quartus, entire,	Eighty-four per cent.
“ “ Decimus-nonus and vicesimus, en- tire,	Eighty-nine per cent.
“ Creed, entire,	Ninety-four per cent.†
Chaucer, Prologue to Canterbury Tales, first 420 verses,*	Eighty-eight per cent.

tives, as at least *primâ facie* English and not Latin words. At the same time, it must be remembered that *history* has taught us almost nothing of the moral and linguistic relations between the Romans and the progenitors of the modern Gothic and Celtic tribes, except that in culture and civilization, as well as in material power, the Latin was the superior race, and that Rome was in a position to exercise an immense moral as well as social influence over those rude populations. With respect, therefore, to the vocabulary of law, of political life, and of intellectual action, we are treading on uncertain ground, when we positively affirm the domestic origin of a Gothic or Celtic root resembling a Latin one, and we can seldom be sure that such words have not passed directly from the latter to the former, instead of descending from a common but remote source.

* For the purpose of determining more satisfactorily the true character of the diction of Langland and of Chaucer, I have counted both the different words of foreign derivation and the repetitions of them, in the *Passus Decimus-Quartus* of *Piers Ploughman* and in an equal amount of the *Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales*. Exclusive of quotations and proper names, the *Passus Decimus-Quartus* contains somewhat less than 3,200 words. Of these, including repetitions, 500, or sixteen per cent., are of Latin or French origin, and as there are about 180 repetitions, the number of *different* foreign words is about 320, or ten per cent. In the first 420 verses of the *Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales*, the number of words is the same, or about 3,200, of which, including repetitions, about 370, or rather less than twelve per cent., are Romance. The repetitions are but 70, and there remain 300, or rather more than nine per cent. of *different* foreign words. In either point of view, then, Chaucer's vocabulary is more purely Anglo-Saxon than that of Langland. It

Chaucer, Nonnes Preestes Tale, entire,	Ninety-three per cent.
“ Squiers Tale, entire,	Ninety-one per cent.
“ Prose Tale of Melibœus, in about 3,000 words,	Eighty-nine per cent.
Sir Thomas More, coronation of Richard III. &c.,* seven folio pages,	Eighty-four per cent.
Spenser, Faerie Queene, Book II. Canto VII., New Testament:	Eighty-six per cent.
John's Gospel, chap. I. IV. XVII.,	Ninety-six per cent.
Matthew, chap. VII. XVII. XVIII.,	Ninety-three per cent.
Luke, chap. V. XII. XXII.,	Ninety-two per cent.
Romans, chap. II. VII. XI. XV.,	Ninety per cent.
Shakespeare, Henry IV., Part I., Act. II.,	Ninety-one per cent.
“ Othello, Act V.,	Eighty-nine per cent.
“ Tempest, Act I.,	Eighty-eight per cent.
Milton, L'Allegro,	Ninety per cent.
“ Il Penseroso,	Eighty-three per cent.
“ Paradise Lost, Book VI.,	Eighty per cent.
Addison, several numbers of Spectator,	Eighty-two per cent.
Pope, First Epistle, and Essay on Man,	Eighty per cent.
Swift, Political Lying,	Sixty-eight per cent.
“ John Bull, several chapters,	Eighty-five per cent.
“ Four last years of Queen Anne, to the end of sketch of Lord Cowper,	Seventy-two per cent.
Johnson, preface to Dictionary, entire,	Seventy-two per cent.
Junius, Letters XII. and XXIII.,	Seventy-six per cent.
Hume, History of England, general sketch of Commonwealth, forming conclusion of chap. LX.,	Seventy-three per cent.

must be remembered, however, that there are few Romance words in *Piers Ploughman* which are not found in other English writers of as early a date, while Chaucer has many which occur for the first time in his verses, and were doubtless introduced by him.

* Ellis (Preface to reprint of Hardyng) doubts whether the life of Richard III., commonly ascribed to Sir T. More, was really written by him; but Ascham treats it as his, and in the edition of More's works prepared by his nephew, and printed in 1557, the preliminary note to the Life of Richard states expressly that it was composed by Sir Thomas about the year 1513, when he was sheriff of London, and that it is now printed from "a copie of his own hand." The internal evidence is, indeed, with Ellis; for, in point of style, this work is much superior to any of More's undisputed productions, and, in fact, deserves the high praise which Hallam has bestowed upon it. Still, I think there is hardly sufficient ground for denying the authorship to More, and I have selected it as the best example of original English of that period.

Gibbon, Decline and Fall, vol. I., chap. VII.,	Seventy per cent.
Webster, Second Speech on Foot's Resolu- tion, entire,*	Seventy-five per cent.
Irving, Stout Gentleman,	Eighty-five per cent.
" Westminster Abbey,	Seventy-seven per cent.
Macaulay, Essay on Lord Bacon,	Seventy-five per cent.
Channing, Essay on Milton,	Seventy-five per cent.
Cobbett, on Indian Corn, chap. XI.,	Eighty per cent.
Prescott, Philip II., B. I., c. IX.,	Seventy-seven per cent.
Bancroft, History, vol. VII., Battle of Bunk- er Hill,	Seventy-eight per cent.
Bryant, Death of the Flower,	Ninety-two per cent.
" Thanatopsis,	Eighty-four per cent.
Mrs. Browning, Cry of the Children,	Ninety-two per cent.
" Crowned and Buried,	Eighty-three per cent.
" Lost Bower,	Seventy-seven per cent.
Robert Browning, Blougram's Apology,	Eighty-four per cent.
Everett, Eulogy on J. Q. Adams, last twenty pages,	Seventy-six per cent.
Ticknor, History of Spanish Literature, Period II., chap. I.,	Seventy-three per cent.
Tennyson, The Lotus Eaters,	Eighty-seven per cent.
" In Memoriam, first twenty poems,	Eighty-nine per cent.
Ruskin, Modern Painters, vol. II., Part III., Sec. II., Chap. V. Of the Superhuman Ideal,	Seventy-three per cent.
Ruskin, Elements of Drawing, first six exer- cises,	Eighty-four per cent.
Longfellow, Miles Standish, entire,	Eighty-seven per cent.
Martineau, Endeavors after the Christian Life, III. Discourse,	Seventy-four per cent.

The most interesting result of these comparisons, perhaps the only one which they can be said to establish, is the fact, that the best writers of the present day habitually employ, in both poetry and prose, a larger proportion of Anglo-Saxon words than

* The apparently large proportion of words of Latin origin in this great speech, popularly known as the Reply to Hayne, is chiefly due to the frequent recurrence of 'Congress,' 'constitution,' and other technical terms of American political law. Wherever it was not necessary to employ these expressions, the style is much more Saxon. Thus, in the eulogy on Massachusetts, containing more than two hundred words, eighty-four per cent. are native, and in the peroration, beginning, 'God grant,' &c., the Anglo-Saxon words are in the proportion of eighty per cent.

the best writers of the last century. This conclusion is not deduced alone from the numerical computations just given, for in estimating the relative prominence of a particular element in the vocabulary, we must take into view the whole extent of that vocabulary. Now, in this latter particular, there has been a great change since the time of Johnson; for while the number of Saxon words remains the same, there has been, within a hundred years, a large increase in terms of alien origin. Some older native words, it is true, have been revived, but these are not numerous. On the other hand, scarcely a word that Johnson and his contemporaries would have used has become obsolete, while the necessities of art, science, commerce, and industry, have introduced many thousands of Latin, French, and other foreign terms. Hence, with respect to vocabulary, the writers of this generation are naturally, and almost necessarily, in the position in which Milton was exceptionally and artificially. The stock of words they possess contains more Latin than Saxon elements; the dialect in which they accustom themselves to think and write is, in much the largest proportion, home-born English. This recognition of the superior force and fitness of a Saxon phraseology, for all purposes where it can be employed at all, is the most encouraging of existing indications with respect to the tendencies of our mother-tongue, as a medium of literary effort.

Had words of Latin and French etymology been proportionally as numerous in the time of Johnson and of Gibbon as they now are, those authors, instead of employing twenty-eight or thirty per cent. of such words, would scarcely have contented themselves with less than fifty. And had either of them attempted the æsthetical theories so eloquently discussed by Ruskin, with the knowledge and the stock of words possessed by that masterly writer, their Saxon would have been confined to particles, pronouns, and auxiliaries, the mere wheel-work of syntactical movement.

Johnson thought that "if the terms of natural knowledge were extracted from Bacon; the phrases of policy, war, and navigation from Raleigh; and the diction of common life from Shakespeare, few ideas would be lost to mankind for want of English words in which they might be expressed." At present, the works of Bacon hardly furnish terms for the precise enunciation of any one truth

of physical science; nor would any English writer now think it possible to narrate the history of a political revolution, to discuss the principles of modern government or of political economy, to detail the events of a campaign or a voyage, or to describe a battle, in the words of Raleigh. Besides all this, the diffusion of knowledge, and of material appliances and comforts, has made the dialects of all the sciences more or less a part of the "diction of common life," and therefore we can no longer converse, even on fire-side topics, altogether in the language of Shakespeare. I do not think it at all extravagant to say that the number of authorized English words, the great mass of which is understood if not actually used by all intelligent persons, is larger, by at least one-fifth, than it was in the middle of the eighteenth century; and this great accretion of familiar vocables consists almost wholly of imported terms. Yet if we compare the usual proportion of Anglo-Saxon words employed by good writers of that epoch and of this with the whole vocabularies known to them respectively, we shall find the relative prominence of the Anglo-Saxon much greater in our own time; for though we know numerically more foreign words, we actually use proportionally fewer in literary composition.

The relation between Milton's entire verbal resources and his habitual economy in the use of them, is most remarkable. Some words of Greek and Latin origin, indeed, such as *air*, *angel*, *force*, *glory*, *grace*, *just*, *mortal*, *move*, *nature*, *part*, *peace*, &c., occur very often, but many of the foreign words employed by him are found in but a single passage, whereas the Saxon words are very many times repeated. Nor is the predominance of such to be ascribed to the number of particles or other small words, for of these Milton is very sparing; and if we translate almost any period in *Paradise Lost* into Latin, we shall find the difference between the number of determinative words in the original and the translation by no means large. All this is true, though in a less degree, of Shakespeare, and as illustrating the infrequency in his works of Latin words, now common, I may observe that *abrupt*, *ambiguous*, *artless*, *congratulate*, *improbable*, *improper*, *improve*, *impure*, *inconvenient*, *incredible*, are all ἀπαξ λεγόμενα, once used words, with the great dramatist.

In comparing the linguistic elements which enter into the dia-

lect of literature as employed by different writers, I think the influence of subject and purpose upon the choice of words has not been sufficiently considered. We find that the vocabulary of the same writer varies very much in its etymological ingredients, according to the matter he handles and the aims he proposes to himself. This appears, very manifestly, from a comparison of the specimens selected for the foregoing computations from the New Testament and from Milton, and not less remarkably in those from Swift, Irving, and Ruskin. The following passages from Irving, in which the words of foreign origin are printed in italics, may serve as illustrations.

From the Stout Gentleman, in Bracebridge-Hall :

“In one *corner* was a *stagnant* pool of water *surrounding* an island* of muck; there were *several* half-drowned fowls crowded together under a cart, among which was a *miserable crest-fallen cock*, drenched out of all life and *spirit*; his drooping tail matted, as it were, into a *single* feather, along which the water trickled from his back; near the cart was a half-dozing cow, chewing the cud, and standing *patiently* to be rained on, with wreaths of *vapour* rising from her reeking hide; a wall-eyed horse, tired of the loneliness of the *stable*, was poking his *spectral* head out of a window, with the rain dripping on it from the eaves; an unhappy cur, *chained* to a dog-house hard by, uttered something every now and then between a bark and a yelp; a drab of a kitchen-wench trampled backwards and forwards through the yard in *pattens*, looking as sulky as the weather itself; every thing, in short, was *comfortless* and forlorn, *excepting* a crew of hard-drinking ducks, *assembled* like *boon companions* round a puddle, and making a *riotous noise* over their *liquor*.”

* *Island* is one of those English words where a mistaken etymology has led to a corrupt orthography. *Isle* may possibly be the French *île*, anciently spelt *isle*, from the Latin *insula*, but the fact that Robert of Gloucester and other early English writers wrote *île* or *yle*, at a time when the only French orthography was *isle*, is a strong argument against this derivation. It is more probably a contraction of *iland*, the Anglo-Saxon *ealand*, *ealond*, *igland*, and the *s* was inserted in both, because, when Saxon was forgotten, the words were thought to have come through the French from the Latin *insula*, in which the *s* is probably radical. Mr. Kilpstein refers the *s* in *island* to the genitive in *s* of the Anglo-Saxon *eá* or *ié*, but this would be an unusual form of composition, and I do not know that *eásland* occurs in Anglo-Saxon.

From Westminster Abbey, in The Sketch Book :

“It was the *tomb* of a *crusader*; of one of those *military enthusiasts*, who so *strangely* mingled *religion* and *romance*, and whose *exploits form* the *connecting link* between *fact* and *fiction*, between the *history* and the *fairy tale*. There is something *extremely picturesque* in the *tombs* of these *adventurers*, *decorated* as they are with *rude armorial bearings* and *Gothic sculpture*. They *comport* with the *antiquated chapels* in which they are *generally found*; and in *considering* them, the *imagination* is *apt* to kindle with the *legendary associations*, the *romantic fiction*, the *chivalrous pomp* and *pageantry* which *poetry* has spread over the wars for the *sepulchre* of *Christ*.”

In the first of these extracts, out of one hundred and eighty-nine words, all but twenty-two are probably native, the proportions being respectively eighty-nine and eleven per cent.; in the second, consisting of one hundred and six words, we find no less than forty aliens, which is proportionally more than three times as many as in the first.

The most numerous additions to the Anglo-Saxon vocabulary, the most important modifications of English syntax, and consequently of the general idiom of our speech, have been mediately or immediately derived from the Latin. So far as grammatical structure is concerned, this influence commenced in the pure Anglo-Saxon period, when of course proper English cannot be said to have existed. The Angles and the Saxons found upon the British soil some traces of the Roman conquest, and Christianity, and with it the language of the Romish church, were domesticated in England long before either had crossed the Elbe, and before a native literature had been created by the race which gave to Britain a new name and a new population.* The Old-Northern or Scandinavian, and some branches of the Germanic families, on the contrary, had acquired a certain culture, and pos-

* Beowulf and some other Saxon poems contain strong internal evidence of having been, in part at least, composed before the diffusion of Christianity among the Anglo-Saxons. But in the form in which we have the poem of Beowulf, it is indisputably of a later date, nor is there any sufficient ground for supposing that it was written down in the heathen period. Whether it previously existed otherwise than as a prose saga, we have no means of determining; and, as a poetical composition, it is, *primit facie* at least, the work of a Christian bard.

essed what may fairly claim to be considered an independent literature, before their adoption of Christianity. The Old-Northern and Germanic languages had accordingly been carried to a higher degree of polish and refinement than the Anglo-Saxon, and they both less needed, and were less susceptible of receiving, grammatical improvement from foreign sources. We consequently find, even in the most ancient forms in which the Anglo-Saxon, itself but a compromise between discordant dialects,* has come down to us, a structure more resembling that of the Romance languages than we meet in Old-Northern or in German. The arrangement of the period, the whole syntax, had been evidently already influenced, and the native inflections (if, indeed, they ever had been moulded into a harmonious system) diminished in number, variety, and distinctness. The tendencies which have resulted in the formation of modern English had been already impressed upon the Anglo-Saxon before the Norman Conquest; and the more complete establishment of the ecclesiastical domination of Rome had introduced some Latin and French words, and expelled from use a corresponding portion of the native vocabulary. It even appears that the Romance dialect of Normandy had partially supplanted the Saxon as early as the reign of Edward the Confessor, and it is stated to have been a good deal used at that time at court, in judicial proceedings, and in the pulpit.†

* See Lecture ii.

† Able philologists have denied that the change which took place in the vernacular in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, was, in any considerable degree, due to the influence of the Norman invaders, and it is argued that the same change would have taken place without the Conquest. It is, I believe, denied by none that the language and literature of England were very powerfully affected by that influence in the fourteenth century, and those who maintain the theory in question, ask us to believe, that though the relations between the immigrant and the indigenous population were still substantially the same, yet the causes which proved so energetic in the reign of Edward III. had been absolutely inert for two hundred and fifty years, and then suddenly and spontaneously sprung into full action. I do not suppose it possible to distinguish between the effects produced by ecclesiastical Latin and by secular Norman, but to refuse to either of them a share in bringing about the change from the Anglo-Saxon of Alfred to the English of the reign of Henry III. is to ascribe to the Anglican tongue an unsusceptibility to external influences, which contrasts strangely with the history of its subsequent mutations.

Price finds confirmation of this theory in alleged corresponding changes of

The causes which have led to the adoption of so large a proportion of foreign words, and at the same time produced so important modifications in the signification of many terms originally English, are very various. The most obvious of these are the early Christianization of the English nation, a circumstance not always sufficiently considered in the study of our linguistic history; the Norman conquest; the Crusades; and especially the mechanical industry and commercial enterprise of the British people, the former of which has compelled them to seek, in the markets of the whole earth, both the material for industrial elaboration and a vent for their manufactures; the latter has made them the common carriers and brokers of the world. With so many points of external contact, so many conduits for the transmission of every species of foreign influence, it would imply a great power of repulsion and resistance in the English tongue if it had not become eminently composite in its substance and in its organization. In fact, it has so completely adapted itself to the uses and wants of Christian society, as exemplified by the Anglo-Saxon race in the highest forms to which associate life has anywhere attained, that it well deserves to be considered the model speech of modern humanity, nearly achieving in language the realization of that great ideal which wise men are everywhere seeking to make the fundamental law of political organization, the union of freedom, stability, and progress.

the Low German dialects, and Latham in those of the Danish and Swedish. But the Low German, and the Danish and Swedish, have been exposed, not indeed to precisely the same causes of revolution as the Anglo-Saxon, but to somewhat analogous influences, and in all these cases the nature and amount of change is, not corresponding to that of the Anglo-Saxon, but almost exactly proportioned to the character and amount of extraneous disturbing force. The Latin has operated more or less on all of them. The Icelandic, isolated as it is, has remained almost the same for seven centuries; the Swedish, and the dialects of secluded districts in Norway, being less exposed to foreign influences than the Danish, retain a very large proportion of the characteristics of the Old-Northern, while the language of Denmark, a country bordering upon Germany, and bound to it by a thousand ties, has become almost half Teutonic. If then we are to refer such changes to *inherent tendencies* only, how are we to explain these diversities between dialects, which, even after the birth of what is distinctively the English language, were still nearly identical? See Sir F. Madden's Preface to Layamon, p. 1, and the authorities there cited. See also Lecture xvii.

It is a question of much interest how far the different constituents of English have influenced each other, or in other words, how far each class of them has impressed its own formal characteristics upon those derived from a different source. Let us take the reciprocal influence of the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin. We shall find it a general rule, that where the English word is made up of a Latin root with new terminal syllables, or suffixes, which modify the signification of the word or determine the grammatical class to which it belongs, those syllables are Saxon, while instances of Saxon radicals with Latin terminations are comparatively rare. With respect to prefixes, however, which, with the root, usually constitute compounds, not derivatives, the case is otherwise, and we have generally employed Latin prefixes with Latin roots,* seldom or never Latin prepositions with Saxon roots. We have indeed taken most of our Latin words entire in some derivative shape, as they were formed and employed by the Latins themselves or the French after them, and thus the two great classes remain distinct in form, each following its own original law; nevertheless if there is a change, the Latin yields. The Saxon roots with Latin passive terminations are chiefly adjectives like *eatable*, *bearable*, *carriageable*, *boatable*, *readable*, to a few of which custom has reconciled us; but many words of this class employed by old writers, such as *doable*, are obsolete, and the ear revolts at once at a new application of this ending; whereas we accept, without scruple, Latin and French roots with a Saxon termination.† *Motionless*, *painful*, *painless*, *joyful*, *joyless*, and

* The Saxon inseparable privative *un-* is an exception, a majority of our words beginning with this prefix being of Romance origin. At present, we incline to harmonize our etymology by substituting the Latin *in-* for the native particle, in words of foreign extraction. For example, *incapable* is now exclusively used for the older *uncapable*.

Palsgrave in his list of verbs, p. 650, gives us *I outcept* for *I except*, but I have not met with this anomalous compound elsewhere, though *outtake* for *accept* is very common in early English.

† There is a Saxon noun, of rare occurrence, *ábal*, signifying *ability*, to which this termination might be referred. Did we not find in Icelandic a corresponding root, *abl* or *af1*, which exists in too many forms to be otherwise than indigenous, I should suspect *ábal* to be itself derived from the Latin adjective *habilis*. The historical evidence is in favor of deriving our adjectival ending in *-ble* from the Latin *-abilis*, *-ibilis*, through the French *-able*, *-ible*. In early English, this termination had by no

even *ceaseless*, almost the only instance of the use of the privative ending with a verbal root,* offend no Englishman's sense of congruity; nor do we hesitate to extend the process, and to say *joyless-ness*, and the like. Foreign verbs we conjugate according to the Saxon weak form, but I remember scarcely an instance of the application of the strong conjugation, with the letter-change, to a Romance root.† We compare foreign adjectives after the Saxon fashion, by the addition of the syllables *-er* and *-est*, except that recently, in conformity to a rule which has no foundation in good taste or in the practice of the best writers, we have, in polysyllables, almost exclusively employed the comparison by *more* and *most*. The rule I speak of probably originated in a sense of incongruity in the adaptation of the Saxon form of comparison to adjectives borrowed from the French, and ending, as modified by English orthoepy, in *-ous*. The adjectives with this ending have all two, perhaps most of them three, syllables, and thus a repugnance, which at first belonged only to the termination, was

means a uniformly passive force, and it formerly ended many words where we have now replaced it by *-al* and *-ful*. Thus, in Holland's Pliny, *mediciable* is always used instead of *medicinal*; Fisher, in his Sermon had at the Moneth Minde of the noble Prynces Margarete, countesse of Richmonde and Darbye, has *vengeable* for *vengeful*, and Hooker (Discourse of Justification) has *powerable* for *powerful*. Similar forms often occur in Shakespeare. We still say *delectable* for *delightful*, but this is going out of use. *Impeccable*, however, maintains its ground among theologians, and *comfortable* is too strongly rooted to be disturbed. In an article on Japan in the London *Daily News* of October 26, 1864, I find mention of a "tradal passage" into the Inland Sea, meaning a passage navigable for and used by merchant ships.

This ending not unfrequently made the adjective a sort of gerundial, and hence "it is *considerable*," in the literature of the seventeenth century, generally meant "it is to be considered." The adjective *reliable*, in the sense of *worthy of confidence*, is altogether unidiomatic. The termination in *-ible* is rather more uncertain in its force than that in *-able*. Milton's use of *visible* in *Paradise Lost*, I. 68, is remarkable. "Darkness *visible*" is not darkness as itself an object of vision, a mere curtain of black impenetrable cloud, but it is a sable gloom, through which, in spite of its profound obscurity, the fearful things it shrouded were supernaturally "visible."

* Gower (Pauli's edition, II. 211, 214) uses *haveless*, but I do not know that this word is found elsewhere. *Tyreless* and *resistless* occur in good writers.

† The participial adjective *distraught* from *distract* is a case of this sort, and Spenser (*Faerie Queene*, B. I. c. VI. St. 48) has *raile* for *rolled*, the preterite of *roll*, but there is some doubt whether *roll* is not of Anglo-Saxon, or at least Gothic parentage.

gradually extended to native words resembling the French adjectives in the number of their syllables. Ascham writes *invenivest*, Bacon *honorablest*, and *ancienter*, Fuller *eminentest*, *eloquenter*, Hooker *learnedest*, *solemnest*, *famoussest*, *virtuosest*, with the comparative and superlative adverbs *wiseliest*, *easilier*, *hardliest*, Sidney even *repiningest*, Coleridge *safeliest*, and similar forms occur abundantly in Shakespeare.* In fact, the rule never was adopted by thoroughly English authors, and is happily little observed by the best usage of the present day.

To one acquainted with the history of Great Britain, the comparative insignificance of the Celtic element, both as respects the grammar and the vocabulary of English, is a surprising fact, and the want of more distinct traces of Celtic influence in the development of the Continental languages is equally remarkable.†

* Even the names of the cardinal points were formerly sometimes compared by the argumentative method. Thus, in the curiously minute account of the comet of the eleventh year of Edward IV. in Warkworth's Chronicle, printed by the Cam. Soc., it is said: * * "and it arose *ester* and *ester*, till it arose full *este*, and *rather* and *rather*."—p. 22. In cognate Danish, all active and most passive participles, all adjectives compounded of adjective and noun, as *bredakuldret*, and many polysyllables, are compared by *meer* and *meest*. This mode of comparison is little used in Icelandic and not at all in Mæso-Gothic. As for the Dutch, see Brill, *Nederlandsche Spraakleer*, p. 208. We have in English, *uppermost*, *foremost*, *hindmost*, *inmost*, *outermost*, *utmost*, and in provincial English, *bettermost*. Gil lays down these rules for the comparison of adjectives:

Per *er* et *est* non comparantur verballa activa in *ing*; ut *luving* amans; neo passiva; ut *luved* amatus, *taught* doctus; uti nec composita cum *abi*, *ful*, *les*, *lyk*, * * ; neque etiam illa quæ per *iv* (*ive*), *ish*, et multa quæ per *ly* (*ly*), aut *us* * * *. Huc etiam refer materialia, ut *göldn* aureus, *stóni* lapideus: item quæ tempus significant et ordinem * * ; ut *vintirj* hibernus, *second*, *third*. Et quamvis aliquando audias *stónier*, aut *fämüser*, tamen pro libertate loquendi tolerabilius erit sermo, potius quam laudabilis scriptura. Per *signa* tamen omnia ferè quæ diximus comparantur; ut *mör luving*, *möet luving*, etc.—Alex. Gil, Logon, Ang., 1621, p. 85.

It will be observed that with Gil the mode of comparison depended on the *ending*, not on the *length* of the adjective.

† See similar views as to insignificance of Celtic element in French: Brachet, Gram. Hist., 21. It is true that the Celts, though apparently never linguistically superior to any of the semi-barbarous tribes with which they were brought into contact, seem, at least in the Gallic branch of the race, to have been, at the time of the Roman invasion, considerably more advanced in many of the arts of civilization than were the Romans themselves. For instance, the elder Pliny, Nat. Hist., Book XVIII., Chap. XXX., informs us that the Gauls had

Of European languages, the Celtic alone has not propagated or extended itself, and it does not appear ever to have been employed by any but those rude races to whom it was aboriginal as well as vernacular. Nor has it in any important degree modified the structure, or scarcely even the vocabulary, of the languages most exposed to its action. Two thousand years ago, if we are to rely on the general, though it must be admitted uncertain, testimony of historical narrators and inquirers, the British islands, France, a large part of Switzerland, a considerable extent of the coasts of the Adriatic, of the valley of the Danube, and of Northern Italy, as well as portions of the Spanish peninsula, and an important territory in Asia Minor, were, with the exception of small maritime colonies of Italian, Greek, and Phenician origin, inhabited

reaping machines surprisingly like some of the earlier forms of the same implement in the United States and England. "As touching the manner of cutting downe or reaping corne, there be diverse and sundry devises. In Fraunce where the fields be large, they use to set a jade or an asse unto the talle of a mightie great wheelebarrow or cart, made in manner of a Van, and the same set with keene and trenchant teeth sticking out on both sides: now is this carre driven forward before the said beast upon two wheelles, into the standing ripe corne (contrarie to the manner of other carts that are drawne after) the said teeth or sharpe tines, fastened to the sides of the wheelebarrow or car aforesaid, catch hold of the corne eares, and cut them off: yet so, as they fall presently into the bodie of the wheelebarrow." It is remarkable also that the Latin names for four-wheeled and some other vehicles were of Gallic etymology. The Gauls are also believed to have invented wooden vessels composed of staves, and our word basket, implying a vessel woven of twigs or thin strips of wood, is known to be of ancient Gallic derivation. Cæsar, in a passage which I have never seen satisfactorily explained, speaks of the Greek *letters* as known to the Gauls, and the walls of some of their fortified stations were apparently laid in mortar. But while the Romans were thus borrowing useful implements and their names from the Gauls, their relations with the Gothic tribes were the reverse; for they furnished the latter with both names and things. Koenen, *Bœrenstand*, p. 17, cites the Netherlandish *akker*, from the Latin *ager*, *hooivork*, from Latin *furca*, *juk*, from Latin *jugum*, *zaad* from *æstum*, *wan* from *vannus*, *dorschelegel* from *flagellum*, *sikkel* from *secula*; *spade* from *spatha*. This list might be greatly extended. Tacitus, *De Mor. Ger.*, c. 26, observes: "Autumni perinde nomen ac bona ignorantur," they have neither the name of autumn nor its fruits; and Ihre, and many other etymologists, suppose that the Dutch *oogst*, the German *obst*, the Danish and Swedish *höst*, are from the Latin name of the harvest month August. So the German *frucht* is in all probability the Latin *fructus*, and the Anglo-Saxon *wunt* can hardly be other than the Latin *mons*.

exclusively by Celts. The race is now confined to Western and South-Western England, the Scottish Highlands, Ireland, and a narrow district in Western France. In Wales alone did they attain an elevated original and spontaneous culture, and in their disappearance from their wide domain, they have left indeed some ruined temples, some popular superstitions, as relics of their idolatrous worship, but scarcely a distinguishable trace of their influence in the character, the languages, or the institutions of the peoples which have superseded them. Upon the Anglo-Caledonian border the Saxons and the Celts were brought face to face, and, after centuries of alternate amity and hostility, reduced at length to a common rule, and to some extent amalgamated with each other. Yet the brief inroads and partial conquests of the Scandinavians have modified the Scottish dialect far more than have the long neighborhood and close relations between the Saxons and the Celts.

We may safely say that, though the primitive language of Britain has contributed to the English a few names of places and of familiar material objects, yet it has, upon the whole, affected our vocabulary and our syntax far less than any other tongue with which the Anglo-Saxon race has ever been brought widely into contact. I might go too far in saying that we have borrowed numerically more words from the followers of Mohammed than from the aborigines of Britain, but it is very certain that the few we have derived from the distant Arabic are infinitely more closely connected with, and influential upon, all the higher interests of man, than the somewhat greater number which we have taken from the contiguous Celtic.

These facts point to a very radical diversity, an irreconcilable incongruity, between the Celtic language and the dialects of the numerous unrelated races that have at one time and another reduced Celtic tribes to subjection. I am not ignorant that recent etymologists have found many resemblances between Celtic and Gothic, as well as Romance radicals, but it is probable that in many instances these very words had been imposed upon the Celts by foreign influences, and in others, the English words which have been said to be Celtic, such as *crook*, *pan*, and the like, can be traced as far back in Gothic as in Celtic dialects.*

* I am not here controverting the opinions of Prichard and other advocates

Languages, like the serfs of ancient times and of the Middle Ages, seem to be *glebæ adscriptitiæ*, and it may be laid down as a general rule, in cases of territorial conquest, (unless the invaders have such a superiority of physical power as to be able to extirpate the native race altogether, or unless they possess a very marked superiority in point of intellect and culture,) that wherever the subjected nation even approximates to an equality in material or mental force, the native dialect is adopted by the conquerors, and soon becomes again the exclusive language of the country. Of this, history exhibits numerous instances, with few, if any, conflicting examples, and it is accordingly in the relative condition and character of the parties, that we are to look for the

of the original Indo-European character of the Celtic languages, but I speak of the actual relations of the Celtic, the Gothic, and the Romance tongues, through the period during which we can trace their fortunes with *historical certainty*. The Celtic dialects, at the earliest moment when we can be fairly said to *know* any thing of their vocabularies, had been long exposed to the action of Gothic and Romance influences, and the English language is a case in point to show that there is scarcely any limit to the proportion of foreign words which a tongue of inferior culture may incorporate into its stock, without losing its own radical character. We have not only borrowed abstract and philosophical terms in multitudes, but many of our test words, our designations of the most familiar things in nature, such as *air, color, face, feature, joint, soil*, are of Latin origin. It is far from improbable that very many of the verbal coincidences between the Celtic and other European languages may find their explanation in the action of like causes. Etymology has its *fashions* and its caprices as well as other human pursuits, and *Keltism* seems just now to be the prevailing epidemic in this department.

Comparative philologists draw inferences from the coincidence of parts of the Gothic and Celtic vocabularies, which seem to me by no means warranted. Nobody doubts that both these classes of speech belong to the Indo-European family, and therefore very many words must be common to them all; but the supposition, that in such cases the Goth borrowed from the Celt, is in most instances contrary to historical probability, and the converse is, most likely, quite as often the fact. In the etymological research of the present day, the historical method of investigation is unhappily much neglected, and ethnologists are constructing historical systems on the foundation of linguistic theory, instead of controlling and rectifying such theory by historical evidence.

The comparative philology of the languages of Europe, in their actual development in the Middle Ages, will ultimately prove one of the fertile sources of instruction upon the true theory and true history of human speech, and we shall find that many Gothic and many Romance words, which have hitherto been referred to very distant sources, are really contributions which the one has borrowed from the other.

causes of the predominance of the Gothic and Romance, and the disappearance of the Celtic people and languages. The extension of the Latin, wherever it took root, was the triumph of civilization, and of that knowledge which is power, over barbarism of manners and inferiority of intellect. In Greece, where the intellectual conditions were reversed, though the armies of Rome were victorious, her language never prevailed, while in the lower Danubian provinces, in Gaul, in Spain, and at last, after a long struggle, in Sicily, as well as a considerable part of Southern Italy, it superseded the indigenous dialects, wherever the Greek had not anticipated it. On the other hand, the barbarian invaders of the Roman empire adopted the languages of their new subjects, and Goths, Vandals, Tatars alike, once established on what was now Christian soil, were soon confounded in speech with the conquered nation. Thus the Hunno-Bulgarians exchanged their Tatar for a Slavic dialect. The Avars and Slaves domiciliated in Greece became Hellenized in language. The Northmen in Western France adopted a Romance tongue, and the Teutons in France and Northern Italy, as well as the Goths in Spain, all conformed to the speech no less than to the religion of the native tribes. True, they in all cases more or less modified the newly acquired language, and dialectic differences between the different Romance branches, otherwise inexplicable, may in part be accounted for by corresponding differences between the tongues whose elements were thus mixed with them. Thus, modern Italian has a considerable infusion of Teutonic words and phrases, and there are communities south of the Alpine chain whose vocabulary is in the largest proportion Teutonic; * just as on the other hand we

* The Cimbric districts, as they are called, consist of the *Sette Comuni*, and the *Tredici Comuni*. The *Sette Comuni*, or *Seven Towns*, occupy a territory thirty or forty miles square, bounded east and west by the Brenta and the Astico respectively, north by a chain of the Tyrolese Alps, and south by a low ridge which separates them from the plain of Vicenza. The *Tredici Comuni*, or *Thirteen Towns*, are of less than half as great territorial extent, and lie near Verona, chiefly in a north-eastern direction. There are also some small Cimbric communities in Friuli. The whole Cimbric population is thirty or forty thousand souls. Some thousands of these now use Italian exclusively, and that language is gradually superseding the Teutonic among the whole people. The Lord's prayer in Cimbric (*Catechism of 1842*) is as follows:

“ Ünzar Vater vön me Hümmele, sai gaéart eür halgar namo; kemme dar

find in Switzerland, intermixed with a German population, small districts whose inhabitants, like those of Wallachia and Moldavia, still speak a corrupted, modernized Latin. In some instances, the new element does not much affect the lexical character, but exhibits itself in the structure, the inflections, and the syntax. Of this the Spanish is an instance. Northern words indeed are not numerous, but the syntax as well as the nobility of the land is largely informed with the *sangre azul*, the blue blood, of the Gothic invader. The entire peninsular speech, and especially the dialects of the provinces longest occupied by the Moslems, were also much affected by the influence of the Arabic.* The Arabs did not adopt the language of Spain, for the reason that, though less numerous and physically weaker than the Spaniards, they were morally and intellectually the superior people, and they therefore imposed their language on their subjects, and essentially modified the speech of provinces never brought under their jurisdiction, though still within the reach of their influence. Spanish Jews and Spanish Christians wrote in Arabic. A Portuguese bishop composed in the language of the Koran treatises on the Deity, the immortality of the soul, purgatory, and eternal punishment, and Christian Spaniards not unfrequently employed the Arabic character in writing their native tongue.

eür Hümme! ; sai gatáant allez baz ar belt jart, bia in Hümme!, asò d' earda, ghetüz heüte ünzar proat von altághe ; un lacetüz naach ünzare schulle, bia bar lácense naach biar den da saint schullik üz ; haltetüz gahütet von tentaciún ; un hévetüz de übel. Asò saiz."

The use of *Heaven* in the second petition, instead of *Kingdom*, is noticeable.

See Schmeller's *Cimbrisches Wörterbuch*, herausgegeben von Bergmann, 1855.

There are, in many other Alpine nooks, fragmentary remains of a Germanic dialect closely akin to the Cimbric of the *Sette* and *Tredici Comuni*, if not identical with it. For instance, in the Kaiser-Thal, the Hoch Deutsch, *der Kleine*, becomes *der Kloane*, and the German *weich*, as I have shown in the American edition of Wedgwood's Etymological Dictionary, becomes in Cimbric, *boach*, which is evidently identical with the Celtic, *bog*—a curious coincidence between words apparently alien to each other, and thus furnishing a new proof of the relationship between the Gothic and the Celtic tongues.

* Interesting observations on the influence of the Gothic and Arabic upon the Romance of Spain will be found in Ticknor's Spanish Literature, vol. I., 95, and vol. III., 201, 337, 371, 385. The estimate of 'Northern' words in Spanish given from a native philologist at p. 385, ten per cent., seems to me too large, but the Gothic portion of the language is so much disguised in form as not readily to be recognized.

In like manner, in the two centuries and a half of Arab dominion in Sicily, the culture of that remarkable people was so thoroughly rooted, that under the Northern conquerors and the Hohenstaufen, Arabic was the language of commerce, and even often employed in public monuments. The ordinances of the Norman princes of Sicily were as frequently drawn up in Arabic as in Greek or Latin, and in the Sicilian churches of the Norman period, Arabic inscriptions appear on the columns and other parts of the structures.*

Considering the prominent political and commercial position of Spain in the sixteenth century, the importance of her literature, and the extent to which it was then cultivated in England, it is surprising that so few English words can be referred to a Spanish origin. Sidney, and other writers of that day who imitated the poetic forms of Spain, borrowed nothing from her vocabulary, and even the dialect of navigation and commerce has adopted few Spanish words which were not originally either Arabic or American. *Cargo* and *embargo* are certainly Spanish, *trade* and *traffic* probably so, but these stand almost alone in our vocabulary. We owe, in fact, more to Portuguese than to Spanish etymology, and it is remarkable that many words now current almost all over Europe, and popularly supposed to be of African or East Indian derivation, are really native Portuguese. Thus, *fetichism* or *feticism*—the low idolatry and sorcery of Western Africa, now so commonly used in all parts of Europe to signify the most debased and superstitious material worship—generally thought to be an African word, is only the Portuguese *feitiço*, † *sorcery* or *witchcraft*, which is derived from the Latin *facere*, *factitius*; *coco*, the well-known name of the nut of a palm and of the tree that produces it, (usually spelled erroneously *cocoa*, ‡ from a con-

* Serradifalco, *Duomo di Monreale*, pp. 24, 41, 73, 84. See also Witte, *Alpinisches u. Transalpinisches*, 429.

† The Spanish etymological correlative of *feitiço* is *hechizo*, *h* in mod. Sp. often corresponding to Port. *f*, *ch* to Port. *t*. Ihre points out the resemblance of these words to the Swedish *hexa*, a witch, and suggests that they may have been introduced into Spain by the Goths.

‡ This false orthography is a comparatively recent corruption. The journals in Purchas, Dampier and all the old travellers, spell the word properly, *coco*, or sometimes *cocoe* or *coker*. Johnson strangely blunders and confounds the sig-

fusion with *cacao*, a totally different vegetable,) is the Portuguese word for *bugbear*, and, according to De Barros, the great historian of his country's Oriental conquests, the name was applied to the nut from its rude resemblance to a distorted human face, or a mask used by nurses to frighten children; * *palaver*, a council of African chiefs, is the Portuguese *palavra*, word, talk; *commodore*, derived by our dictionaries from the Spanish *comendador*, which is of altogether another signification, is a corruption of the Portuguese *capitão mor*, or chief-captain, a phrase precisely equivalent in meaning to our own term. *Caste*, as a designation of social or political rank or class, is from *casta*, a word of doubtful origin, common to Spanish and Portuguese, but it was borrowed by both England and the Northern Continental nations from the Portuguese accounts of India. *Cash* and *cashier* are more probably from the Portuguese *caixa* than from the French *caisse*, and even the current Chinese *cash*, the name of a small coin, has been supposed to come from the Portuguese word. The same language suggests a possible etymology for the obscure word *dungeon*. The *dungeon*, *dongeon*, or *donjon keep*, (Low Latin, *dunjo*, *domgio*, *domnio*.) was originally the principal tower in a feudal castle. It is called in Portuguese *torre de homenagem*, tower of homage, because it contained the reception room in which fealty or homage to the lord was pledged, and this is not improbably the source of the French word and our own.

nification and etymology of *coco* and *cacao*, and modern botany has dignified the Portuguese *bugbear*, by latinizing it into *cocos*, as the generic name of a branch of the palm family.

* Esta casca * * * tem huma maneira aguda, que quer semelhar o nariz posto entre dous olhos redondos; * * * por razão da qual figura sem ser figura, os nossos lhe chamáram *coco*, nome imposto pelas mulheres a qual-quer cousa, com que querem fazer medo ás crianças, o qual nome assi lhe ficou, que ninguém lhe sabe outro, sendo o seu proprio, como lhe os Malabares chamam, Tenga, e os Canarijs, Narle. De Barros, Asia. Dec. III., Liv. III., cap. VII.

Oviedo (Ramusio, III. 64, A., Purchas, III. 962) says: "This first was called *coco* for this cause, that when it is taken from the place where it cleaveth fast to the tree, there are scene two holes, and above them two other naturall holes, which altogether do represent the gesture and figure of the cattles called *mammons*, that is monkeys, when they cry, which [cry] the Indians call *coca*." But De Barros is a higher authority than Oviedo, and his derivation is the more probable.

In all these cases, except the last, which is explained by the resemblance of the Portuguese *homenagem* to the feudal Latin *homagium*, *homanagium*, *homenagium*, the early monopoly of distant navigation and of the African and East Indian trade by the Portuguese, accounts for the introduction of the words into the vocabulary, not of England only, but of all Europe; and it is through the channel of commerce that we have borrowed the phrase to run-*amuck* from the Malays, *taboo* from the Sandwich Islands, and hundreds of other words, now almost universal, from equally remote and obscure sources. There is a very common word, *demijohn*, the name of a large glass bottle covered with wickerwork, which occurs in most European languages in nearly the same form. This strange word has been a sad puzzle to etymologists. It is often written in English with a hyphen between the second and third syllables, as if, notwithstanding its capacity, it were but the half of a whole john. In France, it is made a compound, *dame-jeanne*, Lady Jane, and a French etymologist has fabled that it took its name from its introduction into Europe by an apocryphal Lady Jane, a distinguished dame of that nation. Every one who has been in the East will remember that this portly vessel,—locally called *kara-bah*, whence *carboy*,—is there called *damagan*, or *damajan*, and the name, as well as the thing, is generally supposed to have been borrowed from the Christians by the unbelievers. The fact is, however, that the demijohn was formerly largely manufactured at Damaghan, a town in Khorassan, a province of Persia once famous for its glass works, and hence the name. Our commercial nomenclature is full of similar instances, and the wide range of modern, and especially English, traffic, makes them simple enough; but when we find that the Icelanders, in their remote and isolated abode, call the elephant by the same name as the Arabs, *feel*, we are unable to account for so strange a coincidence, until we learn that in the good old times of simple mediæval devotion, the neophyte Northmen were wont to signalize their conversion from the darkness of heathenism, by a Mediterranean venture, combining the characters of a piratical cruise and a pious pilgrimage. In these expeditions they now and then fell in with an *argosy*,* manned by *paynim* Arabs, or *Blåmenn* as

* *Argosy* is generally supposed to be derived from the appellation of the

they called them, or even entered the harbor of a Moorish town on the coast of Spain, or of Serkland, the land of the Saracens, plundered the infidels, if they were able, and trafficked with them if they were not. Hence it is that we find Cufic coin in Scandinavian barrows, Arabic words in the Old-Northern tongue.

The study of foreign literatures, and the introduction of new words by foreign immigrants, in countries which, like England and America, are centres of attraction for the whole earth, are sources of accretion too familiar to require detailed consideration, but the effects of the extension of commerce and industry deserve more than a passing notice. Every new article of trade, every new style of foreign goods, brings with it either its native designation or an epithet indicative of the country whence it is imported, and the name very often remains in a new application after the particular article has disappeared from our market. Thus *calico* was originally applied to certain cotton goods imported from Calicut, in India, as in French *rouennerie* from *Rouen*. We now use it only of printed cottons of a very different texture, while in England all plain white cottons are called *calico*. In the Levant, the superiority of American cotton goods formerly gave them a preference in the markets, and the hawkers who sold cotton stuffs, of whatever fabric, in the streets, described them as *American* cotton to attract custom. Gradually they dropped the word cotton, and cloths of that material are now called simply *Americans*. When, therefore, an American traveller hears a Hebrew peddler crying *Americani!* at his heels, in the streets of Smyrna or Constantinople, he need not suppose that the Oriental is taunting him with his Yankee nationality; it is only, in the want of a daily *Times*, or *Tribune*, or *Herald*, a mode of advertising that the colporteur has cottons to sell.

Numerous as are the foreign words which commerce and foreign art have incorporated into English, it is probable that these loans have been repaid by England and America, in the contributions we have made to other languages. A distinguished Southern gentleman comforted unlucky English bond-holders, in

mythic ship *Argo*; but it has been suggested, and not without probability, that the name is a corruption of *Ragusan*, the national designation of the vessels employed in the commerce of the important port of Ragusa.

the days of repudiation, by assuring them that the Anglo-Saxon race, on our side of the Atlantic as well as on the other, was as much a debt-paying as a land-stealing people. I need not speak upon the question of pecuniary conscientiousness, but in *words*, which we can spare without much sacrifice, we have been just and even generous. Our trade and our industry, in conjunction with those of England, have sown a broad crop of English and American words over the face of the earth. A French poet complains that England has compelled his countrymen to utter articulations as hard as chewing glass or charcoal :

*Le railway, le tunnel, le ballast, le tender,
Express, trucks, et wagons, une bouche Française
Semble broyer du verre ou mâcher de la braise.*

These words have passed from England to every Continental country, but it is only a restitution of borrowed stock with usury, for of the seven, only *ballast*, *wagons*, and the last half of *railway*, are Anglo-Saxon. The nomenclature of steam navigation, which has become not less universal, is more purely American. Wherever you meet the steamboat your ear will welcome familiar sounds. You will hear Frenchmen on the Rhone, Danes in the Belts, Teutons on the Rhine, Magyars and Slaves on the Danube, and Arabs on the Nile, all alike shouting, *half-steam ! stop her ! go ahead !* and many an uninstructed traveller has been agreeably surprised at finding such a remarkable resemblance between good mother-English and barbarous Dutch or heathen Arabic, as these homelike words so plainly indicate.

Vegetable nature has provided for the dissemination of plants by employing the movable winds and waters, and the migratory beasts of the field and fowls of the air, in the transportation of their seeds. Providence has not less amply secured the diffusion and intermixture of words of cardinal importance to the great interests of man. Religion, natural science, moral and intellectual philosophy, and diplomacy, have introduced into English thousands of words nearly identical with those employed for the same purposes in all the languages in Christendom. The history and origin of these are generally very easily traced, but every generation gives birth to a multitude of expressions whose date we can fix with approximate precision, but the etymology and

source of which are unknown at the very period of their introduction. These are, for the most part, mere popular words, which obtain no place in literature, but die with the memory of the occasions out of which they grew. But it sometimes happens that such words become permanent, though often ungraceful, additions to our vocabulary, and remain as standing enigmas to the etymologist. Of such, our American *caucus* is an example, and every man's recollection will suggest other instances.

The French essayist Montaigne gives us a striking example of the strange accidents by which foreign words are sometimes introduced. In order the better to familiarize him with Latin, the common speech of the learned in those days, he was allowed in his childhood to use no other language, and not only his teachers, but his parents, attendants, and even his nurserymaid, were obliged to learn enough of Latin to converse with him in it. The people of the neighboring villages adopted some of the Latin words which they heard constantly used in the family of their feudal lord; and, writing fifty years later, he declares that these words had become permanently incorporated into the dialect of the province.*

* Quant au reste de sa maison, c'estoit une regle inviolable que ny luy meisme, ny ma mere, ny valet, ny chambriere, ne parloient en ma compaignie qu' autant de mots de latin que chascun avoit apprins pour jargonner avec moy. C'est merveille du fruit que chascun y fait : mon pere et ma mere y apprindrent assez de latin pour l'entendre, et en acquirent à suffisance pour s'en servir à la necessité, comme feirent aussi les aultres domestiques, qui estoient plus attachez à mon service. Somme, nous latinizames tant, qu'il en regorgea jusques à nos villages tout autour, où il y a encores, et ont prins pied par l'usage, plusieurs appellations latines d'artisans et d'utils. Montaigne, *Essais*, Liv. I. ch. XXV.

In order that I may not be supposed to have borrowed from a contemporary who has introduced into a recent volume some of the Portuguese etymologies mentioned above, together with the example from Montaigne, I think it proper to say that all those etymologies, with two or three exceptions not material to the present purpose, and the illustration from the French essayist, were given by me in this lecture, at its delivery in November, 1858, and contained in an extract printed in the *New York Century*, in March, 1859, for the most part in the *very words* since employed by the ingenious and agreeable writer to whom I refer. Although credit was not given, I certainly do not imagine that there was any intentional *appropriation* of matter collected by me, and I state the fact only to defend myself against a possible charge, of which I very cheerfully acquit the author in question.

LECTURE VII.

SOURCES AND COMPOSITION OF ENGLISH.

II.

THE English language, though by no means wanting in philological individuality and grammatical unity, is, as we have seen, very heterogeneous in its vocabulary. Its harmony and coherence of structure are due to the organic vitality of its cardinal and fundamental element, the Anglo-Saxon tongue, which possesses not only uncommon receptivity with reference to the admission of foreign ingredients, but an equally remarkable power of assimilating strange constituents, naturalizing them as we say in America, and converting them from alien, if not hostile, forces, into obedient and useful denizens. There is found elsewhere, and especially in the languages of those Oriental families upon whom the Arabs have imposed their religion and with it their theological dialect and their law, a great readiness to admit foreign words and foreign phrases, without moulding these linguistic acquisitions into any idiomatic conformity with the principles of their own structure. Arabic words are received into Persian and Turkish with all their anomalous inflections, and whole phrases are borrowed, without any change of form or termination to suit them to the genius and the syntax of the speech that adopts them. Persons familiar with the literature of Germany and of Scandinavia will remember that in the seventeenth century the languages of those countries exhibited, in a marked degree, a similar tendency with respect to Latin technical phrases and combinations, and many of our old English writers indulge largely in the same practice. The purism, which has for some time prevailed in Germany and Scandinavia, has expelled from their respective literatures not only foreign complex phrases, but, to a considerable extent, all words of extrane-

ous etymology. In English, we have no means of supplying the place of such expressions, and the essentially mixed character of the speech renders them less repugnant to our taste than they are in languages so constituted as to be able to do without them. A large proportion of these foreign mercenaries were first employed in the nomenclatures of the learned professions, and many are still confined to them. Others have passed from the bar, the pulpit, and the academic hall, into the language of common life, and are, though with a certain hesitation, often used by the most un-schooled persons. The lawyer speaks of the rule *caveat emptor*, denies the authority of an *obiter dictum*, contends that the *onus probandi* lies on the other side, disputes how far words spoken are a part of the *res gestæ*, and mentions an undecided question as being still *sub judice*. These, with many more of the like sort, remain the exclusive property of that much suffering profession, which is condemned

to drudge for the dregs of men,
And scrawl strange words with a barbarous pen,

while others have become parcel of the heritage of the *lay gents*, as lawyers call the non-professional world. The dialects of logic, of criticism, and of parliamentary law, have also contributed largely to scatter through our speech these incongruous expressions, the currency of which amounts to a confession that our own language is too poor to furnish a dress for many ideas which we have borrowed from alien sources. People who know small Latin make deductions *à priori*, *à posteriori*, and *à fortiori*, use arguments *ad hominem*, and denounce the conclusions of their opponents as *non sequiturs*; college graduates make affectionate mention of their *alma mater*; critics quote *verbatim et literatim*, and note a casual error of speech as a *lapsus linguæ*; in all deliberative bodies resolutions are adopted, *nemine contradicente*, and when the business of the meeting is terminated, the assembly is adjourned *sine die*; protectionists and free-traders dispute about *ad valorem* duties; politicians hold offices *ad interim*, *durante bene placito*, or *pro tempore*; all the world says *et cetera*; and *vice versâ*, though with a pronunciation of the *v*, which comes unfortunately near a *w*, has even

entered into the vulgar Cockney dialect.* Many Greek and Latin nouns are employed in English with their original plurals. Thus we write *phenomena* not *phenomenons*; *memoranda* perhaps more frequently than *memoradums*; *termini* of a railroad not *terminusses*, and some very classical and critical persons have gone so far as to say *omnibi* for *omnibusses*. But all these are exceptional cases, and the frequent use of foreign forms and phrases is contrary to the genius of every cultivated language, as well as to the general rules of idiomatic propriety and good taste.†

In inflected languages, declinable words, including all those which embody the fundamental meaning of the period, usually have endings which not only determine their grammatical class and category, but are also characteristic of the language to which they belong. Thus, for instance, in a Greek or Latin article, noun or adjective, the terminal syllables alone generally tell us the number, case, and gender of the word; in a verb, the number, mood, tense, and voice; and in all these parts of speech, they further inform us that the radical which they qualify is Greek and not Latin, or the contrary. In English, on the other hand, we have very few endings which are indicative of the class of the word, of its grammatical relations, or of the etymological source from which it is derived. For this reason, and because also our few specific terminations are in many cases applied to foreign roots, we can never confidently pronounce upon the nationality of English vocables, by the terminal syllables alone. A similar uncertainty, though in a somewhat smaller degree, prevails with respect

* The occurrence of Latin phrases in popular Italian is easily explained, and they are often used in a corrupt form; thus, the peasants of the Pistojeese have made a verb, *pisoltrare* from the Latin adverbial phrase, *plus ultra*. Giuliani, *Linguaggio Vicente d'Italia*, gives other similar examples.

† *Ignis fatuus*, now very common, does not appear to have been current in Fuller's time, for in his comment on Ruth, p. 88, he uses *meteor of foolish fire*, instead, and Marvell applies the same phrase to the glow-worm. We can hardly be said to have had a puristic period or school in English, though individual writers have occasionally manifested such a tendency. Mulcaster, for example, is sparing of words of Greek origin, and prefers the more familiar Latin, sometimes substituting for the Greek new-coined terms from Latin roots, in the want of flexible Saxon primitives. But these he conforms to the English rules of derivation, or, as he calls it, *enfranchises* them. Thus he uses *séverer* for diæresis, and *uniter* for hyphen. See *Lecture xxvii*.

to prefixes and other initial syllables, and therefore, especially since the assimilation of the English orthography to that of the Continental languages, it is impossible to lay down any very precise rules for determining, by the form of a word, whether it is of domestic or of alien origin. But it is, for a variety of reasons, desirable to be able to refer the several constituents of our language to their proper sources, and, in spite of the uncertainty of any one criterion, we may, by the use of several, including not the form only but the grammatical class of the word and its general signification, form a probable judgment as to its nationality, even without a technical knowledge of etymology.

The first and most obvious criterion with respect to the origin of English words, is found in the grammatical class to which they belong. Interjections are so much alike throughout the world, that none of the few we possess can be said to be exclusively characteristic of English, but most of our true interjections are doubtless of native growth. The articles, pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions, auxiliary verbs, the numerals* one, two, three, four, and so on up to million, exclusive; the ordinals to the millionth exclusive; all these are Anglo-Saxon, except the ordinal *second*, which we have borrowed from the Latin through the French. The simple life of the Anglo-Saxons gave them little occasion for numbers beyond thousands, and modern astronomy, by making us familiar with celestial distances, first taught us the want of greater numerical expressions.† The singular exception of *second* among the ordinals is due to the fact, that neither in Anglo-Saxon nor the cognate Mæso-Gothic and Icelandic, was there any specific ordinal corresponding to the numeral *two*, the place of such an one being supplied in both by *other*, and they counted *first, other, third, &c.*, using *other* as we do in the phrase *every other line*.‡

* Rask ranks the numerals with the pronouns, and some other grammarians incline to make them a class by themselves.

† In Aelfric's Homily on the Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, Thorpe's edition, l. 348, we find a singular mode of expressing great numbers, by the multiplication of *þusend*, the highest collective numeral in the vocabulary: "Ten *þusend siþan hundfealde þusenda him mid wunodon*:" *ten thousand times hundredfold thousands dwelt with him*.

‡ The want of etymological relationship noticeable between the numerals and the ordinals is by no means exclusively characteristic of the Gothic languages. As the English *first* is not derived from *one*, and *second* is foreign altogether,

Having thus assigned exclusively to the Anglo-Saxon one half the parts of speech, we have only the substantives, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs to deal with.*

With respect to the signification of words as a clew to the linguistic source from which they are derived, it may be observed that, in general, the familiar names of the members and organs of the body and their functions, the words indicative of the common duties, cares, labors, and passions of rural and domestic life, in short, of all those primary objects, arts, and sentiments with which we become acquainted, not through books, but by the daily round of human experience, are Saxon. In examining the vocabulary more in detail hereafter, I shall have occasion to refer again to this point, and I will only mention here one remarkable peculiarity with respect to English words denoting the degrees of family relationship. The Anglo-Saxon had its appropriate names for direct as well as collateral relatives, in both the ascending and the descending line, though, as in all dialects belonging to rude and patriarchal life, where the family is kept together for generations, the designations of all but the nearest relations of affinity and consanguinity were vaguely employed.† Now, in

so the Latin *primus* and *secundus* are in no way connected with *unus* and *duo*, nor is the Greek *πρῶτος* a derivative of *εἰς*. *First*, *primus*, and *πρῶτος* are respectively formed from prepositions or adverbs meaning *before*, so that *first* is *foremost*, and we find *foremost* for *first* in Mandeville and other old writers.

The Anglo-Saxon forms of this word obviously point to this etymology. *Furthest* is found for *first* in Lord Herbert's *Life*, and Gower uses this form :

And when he weneth have an ende,
Than is he *furthest* to beginne.

Conf. Am., Pauli, II. 2.

The Latin *secundus* is clearly allied to the root of *sequor*, *I follow*, and *secundus*, is *following*. The regiments of the English Royal Guards, true to the race-feeling of *second to none*, have long been known, not as *First*, *Second*, *Third*, but as *the First*, *the Coldstream* (where one of their battles was won), *the Third*, &c.

* The reader will find the general relations of the Anglo-Saxon to the vocabulary of modern English ably discussed in an article in the *Edinburgh Review* for 1830.

† Thus in the Armenian provinces of Russia, where the patriarchal system still subsists in full vigor, and where all the descendants remain in the family of the ancestor as long as he lives, the younger members are all known to

the transition from the simple manners of the Anglo-Saxons to the more civilized and artificial institutions and language of their English successors and representatives, we have retained the primitive names for those relatives who, in advanced stages of society, usually compose one household and gather around one fireside; but we have rejected the native appellations for all those who presumably dwell under another roof-tree, and, regarding them as, comparatively, strangers, have bestowed upon them foreign names. *Father, mother, husband, wife, bridegroom, bride, son, daughter, brother, sister, step-father* and *step-mother, step-son* and *step-daughter*, are all pure Anglo-Saxon; *grand-father* and *grand-mother, grand-son* and *grand-daughter*, are half Romance; *uncle, aunt, nephew, niece* and *cousin*, altogether so.

The next comprehensive rule is, that monosyllables of whatever class, and words compounded or derived from monosyllables which exist independently in English, are Anglo-Saxon. To this general statement there are many exceptions, but these will in most cases be recognized by the aid of rules derived from the character of the initial and permanent final letters.

As respects initial radical letters, not prefixes, it will be found that the following generally indicate an Anglo-Saxon origin: *bl* and *br*,* *dr*,† *gl* and *gr*, *k*, and especially *kn*, and *sh*. Words beginning with *ea* are almost uniformly Anglo-Saxon. I remember no exceptions but *eager, eagle*, and their derivatives, and in fact, the same combination or that of *oa*, as in *oak*, occurring in any part of a word, usually indicates a Saxon root, as does also the semi-vowel *w*. *Th* is found only in words originally Saxon or Greek.

On the other hand, the great frequency of Latin words compounded with prepositions makes it probable: That if the first letter be the vowel *a*, the word is Latin with the prefix *a b*, a *d*

each other as brothers and sisters, and cousins are not regarded as remoter relatives than children of the same parents.—See Haxthausen, *Transcaucasia*.

* The principal exceptions to this rule are *blame, blanch, blank, blaspheme, blemish, blench*; *brace*, several scientific compounds and derivatives from the Greek *βραχίον*, *branch, brief* and other derivatives from the Latin *brevis*, *brick, brilliant*, and few other doubtful or less important words.

† Except *drape, dress*, and some others.

or ante; if *e* followed by a consonant, Latin with the preposition *e* or *ex*; if *co*, Latin with the prefix *con* or *cum*; if *de*, Latin with the prefix *de*; if *i*, Latin with *in*; if *o*, followed by a consonant, Latin with the prefix *ob*; if *p*, Latin with the prefix *per*, *præ*, *præter*, or *pro*; if *su*, Latin with the prefix *sub* or *super*; if *r*, Latin with the prefix *re*.

The diphthong *æ*, though employed in Anglo-Saxon, is no longer found in native English words, and its occurrence in any syllable now marks a Latin or Greek origin; *ear*, *oi* and *ou* are almost confined to words of modern French formation, though *-oid* and *-oidal* terminate many words derived from the Greek, and they are also used as endings expressive of likeness in connection with roots belonging to other languages.

A Greek etymology is indicated by the initials *eu* and sometimes *en*; as also by *æ*, the prefixes *apo*, *para*, and *peri*, and sometimes *pro*; and by the initial combinations *chr* and *rh*; by *ph* and *th* occurring anywhere in a word, and in verbs, by the ending *-ize*, though this is sometimes used with Romance roots, as in *fraternize*.

The Anglo-Saxon had several distinct terminations for adjectives, and faint traces of most of them may still be detected; but those most readily recognizable are *-y*, as in *windy*, *cloudy*; *-ish* and *-some*, as in *whitish*, *gamesome*; *-ful*, as *fearful*; and *-less*, as in *loveless*. Of these, all but the last two are chiefly confined to Saxon roots, while *-ful* and *-less* are applied indiscriminately to radicals from all sources, as *painful*, *joyless*.*

One of the most familiar English endings of nouns is *-or*, in-

* The adverbial ending *-ly* is applied indiscriminately to Saxon and foreign roots, though its use has been much restricted in more modern English. In the prologue to an old translation of the Scriptures (Wycliffite versions, i. p. 87 n.), we find *Ebruely*, *Greekyly*, *Latynly*, corresponding to the Latin *Hebraicè*, *Græcè*, *Latinè*, and in Wycliffe, Mark xii. 1, *parably* for, in parables.

In a dialogue on Free-Masonry, ascribed to Henry VI., and printed in the Lives of Leland, Hearne, and Wood, Oxford, 1772, vol. I. 97, *headly* is used for *chiefly*, or *particularly*.

“Quest. What mote ytt (Free-Masonry) be?”

“Ans. Ytt beeth the Skyle of Nature, the understandynge of the myghte that ys herynna, and its sondrye worckynges; sonderlyche, the Skyle of Rectenynges, of Waightes, and Metynges, and the treu manere of Faconnyng al thynges for Mannes use, *headlye*, *Dwellynges*, and *Buyldynges* of alle *Klndes*,” &c., &c.

dicative of the agent, but it is now so completely confounded with the Latin *-or*, and the French *-eur*, represented in our orthography by *or* and *our*, that it has lost its value as a characteristic. The nominal endings *-dom* and *-hood*, and the diminutive *-ling*, pretty certainly indicate that the word is pure English, while *-ness* and *-ship*, both Anglo-Saxon endings, are freely applied to French and Latin primitives.

The Saxon infinitive verbs ended in *-an*, but since we have dropped this characteristic, we have no verbal endings except those in *-ize* and *-ate*, used with foreign roots only, and the terminations of the tenses and participles, which are applied indiscriminately to all verbs, without regard to etymology. If, however, a verb is declined with what is called the strong conjugation, or by a change of vowel, as present *break*, past *broke*, it is almost certainly Anglo-Saxon.

The French or Latin endings *-ous* for adjectives, *-ess* as the sign of the feminine noun, *-ment* expressive of state or condition, *-ance*, *-ty*, *-on*, and *-ude*, are in most cases employed only with Romance roots; and though convenience and habit have reconciled us to *endearment*, a Saxon radical with a Romance prefix and termination, we reluctantly accept new heterogeneous combinations of this sort. *Enlightenment*, a word of like formation, though very much wanted, has long knocked at our door, without being yet fairly admitted to the native circle.

Most of these rules have their exceptions, and they do not exhaust the list of etymological characteristics, but I believe they embrace the principles of most frequent and general application, and they will be found sufficient to determine the origin of a great majority of the words of our vocabulary.

With the exception of Greek, as the source of most of the newly framed nomenclature of science, the Latin and the French are the only languages which have contributed any large masses of words to our general stock, though particular imported arts and processes have brought with them technical terms belonging to other tongues.

It is often impossible to determine from internal evidence, from the form, alone, of a word of original Latin etymology, whether we derived it directly from its primitive source, or have taken it at second-hand from the French. But I think that in

most of these doubtful cases, the balance of probability is strongly in favor of the French, as the immediate parent; and this I argue from the fact, that though the influence of the Latin had modified the Saxon syntax, it had not, to the same extent, affected the general vocabulary of the people, until the Norman Conquest made French the official language of the government and the fashionable dialect of the nobility. Most old words of this class make their first appearance in translations from the French, as for instance in Chaucer's versions. Nor is the strict conformity of a word to the Latin orthography by any means a proof that it was first borrowed from the Latin; for when classical literature became a familiar study in England, as it did soon after the invention of printing, very many words which had been introduced from France and long used with the French orthography, were reformed in their spelling so as to bring them nearer to their primitive etymology, and then a new pronunciation was often adopted, more accordant to the new orthography. These changes both in form and orthoepy are of much philological interest, but as I shall have occasion to examine them more fully hereafter, I will here content myself with a single instance. *Subject* was originally written *subgette* or *sugette* without the *o*, and of course pronounced without it, as in French. When it was recognized as a Latin word, the *o* was restored, and the pronunciation changed accordingly.

The Anglo-Saxon embodies the formative principle, and is, in the strongest possible sense, the organic mother of the English language. I repeat, *in the strongest sense*, because, although we have admitted a great number of foreign words—so great, in fact, that we may be said to have two parallel vocabularies and to have created a language within a language—yet, after all, in the essential characters of speech, there is a closer resemblance between our modern dialect and Saxon than between Italian and Latin, although there are few Italian words not derived from the Latin. Indeed, this double form of our language, with respect to what are called *lexicalia*, or mere etymology, is a fact altogether unique in European philology. We possess a garment which, remaining always the same in form, may yet be worn either side out, throwing up now the warp and now the woof, and presenting almost a complete diversity of colors as well as of tissue, and we have the

rare facility of so modifying our complexion, as to be entitled to lay claim to exclusive cousinship with either the Gothic or the Romance families, and yet sail the whole time under the Saxon flag. It is true that while we can readily frame a sentence wholly in Anglo-Saxon, we cannot easily do the same with words entirely Latin, because the determinative particles and auxiliaries, the bolts, pins, and hinges of the structure, must be Saxon. In borrowing Latin words, we brought with them neither their inflections nor their particles, and, therefore, though we may make them the ashlar of the period, yet both the mortar and the bond are always English.

The following extract from Macaulay's article in the *Edinburgh Review*, on Croker's Boswell, well illustrates the difference between a Saxon English and a Latinized diction :

“Johnson's conversation appears to have been quite equal to his writings in matter, and far superior to them in manner. When he talked, he clothed his wit and his sense in forcible and natural expressions. As soon as he took his pen in his hand to write for the public, his style became systematically vicious. All his books are written in a learned language—in a language which nobody hears from his mother or his nurse—in a language in which nobody ever quarrels, or drives bargains, or makes love—in a language in which nobody ever thinks. It is clear that Johnson himself did not think in the dialect in which he wrote. The expressions which came first to his tongue were simple, energetic, and picturesque. When he wrote for publication, he did his sentences out of English into Johnsonese. His letters from the Hebrides to Mrs. Thrale are the original of that work of which the *Journey to the Hebrides* is the translation, and it is amusing to compare the two versions. ‘When we were taken up stairs,’ says he in one of his letters, ‘a dirty fellow bounced out of the bed on which one of us was to lie.’ This incident is recorded in the *Journey* as follows: ‘Out of one of the beds on which we were to repose, started up, at our entrance, a man black as a Cyclops from the forge.’ Sometimes Johnson translated aloud. ‘The Rehearsal,’ he said, very unjustly, ‘has not wit enough to keep it sweet’; then, after a pause, ‘It has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction.’”

In the first of the two periods just quoted, the style is characterized as unidiomatic, quite as much by the suspension of the sense in consequence of the complicated inversion, “Out of one of the beds, started up, at our entrance, a man,” as by the selection of the words which compose it.

Many languages are so copious and so flexible, that the same thing, or nearly the same thing, may be said in several different

forms, but there are few, if any, where the range of expression is so great as in English. Take, for example, two or three good English translations of a foreign author, and you will generally find them, though perhaps equally true to the original, yet very widely different from each other, both in vocabulary and in structure of period. This may happen in different ways. One translator may choose his words from the Saxon, the other from the Latin stock, or they may incorporate into their respective styles the two elements in equal proportions, but differ in their selection of synonymous expressions; or again, they may prefer, the one a structure of period formed more upon classical, the other more upon indigenous models.

In spite of the necessity of frequently introducing determinatives in languages with few inflections, it will in general be found that a given period, framed wholly in Anglo-Saxon, will contain as few words, perhaps even fewer, than the same thought expressed in the Romance dialect of English. The reason of this is that the unpleasant effect of the frequent recurrence of particles has obliged us to invent forms of expression in which such members, though grammatically required to complete the period, are dispensed with, and we use those forms with less repugnance in Saxon combinations where they were first employed, than in Latin ones, which are of later introduction and less familiar structure. Thus we say, 'The man I bought the house of,' 'the man we were talking of,' and we may, with equal grammatical propriety, say, 'the gentleman I purchased the house of,' 'the person we were conversing of'; but we should be much more likely to employ a more formal syntax, 'the gentleman of whom I purchased the house,' 'the person of whom we were conversing.' Again, one would say, 'I told him I had called on General Taylor,' omitting the conjunction *that*, before the second member of the period; but if we employed Romance words, we should more probably retain the conjunction, as, 'I informed him *that* I had paid my respects to the President.' Although, then, the Anglo-Saxon so far controls all other elements that we may grammatically employ foreign words in the same way as native ones, yet a half-unconscious sense of linguistic congruity usually suggests a more formal structure of the period when it is composed chiefly of Romance radicals.

Our best proverbs and proverbial phrases, especially the alliterative and rhyming ones, our pithy saws, our most striking similes and descriptive expressions, and our favorite quotations, are in general, wholly, or in a very large proportion, made up of native English words. Take for example these quotations from Scripture :

“ Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.”

“ His hand shall be against every man, and every man’s hand against him.”

“ Bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.”

“ I have been young, and now am old ; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.”

“ If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.”

“ Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.”

“ Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.”

“ For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind.”

“ And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks.”

“ Therefore, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them ” ; and so, the popular version of this law :—“ Do as you would be done by.”

“ Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

In these quotations, as well as in hundreds of others from the same exalted source, every word, with the doubtful exception of *pruning*, is Saxon. So, these proverbs are expressed wholly in native English :

When you are an anvil, hold you still ;

When you are a hammer, strike your fill.

If you do not want to go into the stove, lie athwart the door.

Be not a baker, if your head be of butter.

The horse thinks one thing ; he that rides him another.

The singing-man keeps his shop in his throat.

One nail drives out another.

Where an important thought, a maxim or illustration, has been uttered by equally high authorities in the Saxon and the Latin idiom, the former acquires established popular currency. The parable of the man who built his house upon the sand is given us by both Matthew and Luke, and the two narratives are identical in their facts. Matthew, as rendered by the authorized translation, gives the catastrophe in plain Saxon-English :

“ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”—Matt. vii. 27.

The learned evangelist Luke employed a more classic style of narrative, and the translators have endeavored to give the effect of this by a less idiomatic and more ornate Latinized diction :

“Against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.”—Luke vi. 49.

The narrative of Matthew specifies two circumstances omitted by Luke, “the rain descended,” and “the winds blew.” In the former phrase our translators employed the Latin word “*descended*,” in order to avoid the repetition of the verb “*fell*,” which was needed in the subsequent clause describing the fall of the house, but otherwise the words are all Saxon.

In the corresponding passage in Luke, there are three emphatic Latin words, *vehemently*, *immediately*, and *ruin*. Now let us compare the two passages, and say which, to every English ear, is the most impressive :

“And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

“Against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.”

There can scarcely be a difference of opinion as to the relative force and beauty of the two versions, and accordingly we find that while that of Matthew has become proverbial, the narrative of Luke is seldom or never quoted.*

* It may be interesting to compare the Greek text of these two passages with the Mæso-Gothic, and the early Anglican versions. I give the Greek (Scholz's text) and Tyndale's translation from Bagster's Hexapla, London, 1841 ; the Mæso-Gothic from Gabelentz and Loebe, the Anglo-Saxon from Klipstein, and Wycliffe from the Wycliffite versions, Oxford, 1850.

From MATTHEW vii. 27.

Καὶ κατέβη ἡ βροχὴ καὶ ἦλθον οἱ ποταμοὶ, καὶ ἐπνευσαν οἱ ἄνεμοι, καὶ προσέκοψαν τῇ οἰκίᾳ ἐκείνῃ, καὶ ἔπεσε· καὶ ἦν ἡ πτώσις αὐτῆς μεγάλη.

MÆSO-GOTHIC OF ULPHILAS.

Jah atfdþja dalaþ rign jah qemun awos jah vaivoun vindos jah bistuggun bi jainamma razna jah gadraus jah vas drus is mikils.

ANGLO-SAXON.

Tha rinde hyt, and thaer côm flod, and blewon windas, and ahruron on thaet hus ; and thaet hus feoll, and hys hryre was mycel.

I cannot, upon this occasion, enter upon the history of the primary amalgamation of the incongruous elements which compose the English speech, for this would involve a minuteness of detail, and an amount of grammatical discussion, that would not be otherwise than fatiguing; but it will not be irrelevant to our present purpose to make a few observations upon the change which took place in the fourteenth century, and which impressed upon our language many of the most striking features that distinguish it from the Anglo-Saxon. The work of Langland called *Piers Ploughman's Vision*, and its sequel, the *Creed*, are of this century; but, both in poetic form and in vocabulary, they belong, not indeed to the Anglo-Saxon, but to the transition, or what may be called the *tentative* or experimental period, when the new speech was striving to detect and bring out its own latent affinities and tendencies. Besides, the diction and syntax of those works are marked by peculiarities which are, with apparently good reason, held to be characteristic rather of certain local dialects than of the general idiom of the period. English literature must therefore be considered as commencing with the writings of

WYCLIFFE.

And rayn came down, and floodis camen, and wyndis blewen, and thei hurliden in to that hous; and it felle down, and the fallyng doun thereof was grete.

TYNDALE.

And abundaunce of rayne descended, and the fluddes came, and the wyndes blew and beet vpon that housse, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

From LUKE vi. 49.

ἡ προσέρρηξεν ὁ ποταμὸς, καὶ εὐθὺς ἔπεσε, καὶ ἐγένετο τὸ ῥῆγμα τῆς οἰκίας ἐκείνης μέγα.

MÆSO-GOTHIC OF ULPHILAS.

þpatei bistagq flodus jah suns gadraus, jah varþ so usvalteins þis raznis mikla.

ANGLO-SAXON.

And thaet flod in-fleow, and hraedlice hyt afeoll; and wearth mycel hryre thaes huses.

WYCLIFFE.

In to which the flood was hurlid, and a non it felde doun; and the fallinge doun of that hous is maad greet.

TYNDALE.

Agaynst which the fludde did bet; and it fell by and by. And the fall of that housse was grete.

Wycliffe, Gower, and Chaucer. The advance of Wycliffe* upon Langland is chiefly grammatical, not lexical; at least, the difference in the proportion of foreign words used by them respectively is inconsiderable. The influence of Continental secular literature, as distinguished from the style and diction of theological compositions, is hardly traceable in Wycliffe, but very conspicuous in his poetical contemporaries. The crown of England, in the best days of Edward III., numbered perhaps as many French as British subjects, and its Continental territory, where French only was native, was scarcely less extensive than its English soil. The two languages had existed in England side by side for three whole centuries, and the Norman dialect was the favorite speech of court and aristocratic life. That Chaucer, himself a courtier, should have imbibed a large infusion of the French element, was natural, and copying, too, from foreign models and translating from foreign authors, it was inevitable that his diction should exhibit traces of French influence. Chaucer accordingly used a number of French and Gallicized Latin words not found in other English writers of his time, and there is no doubt that many of them have been retained upon his authority in place of equally appropriate and expressive Saxon terms. So far, therefore, the charge often preferred against him of having alloyed the language by the introduction of French words and idioms, though by no means true in its whole extent, is not absolutely without foundation, but at the same time his syntax remained substantially and essentially Saxon, and a comparison of his poems with those of other writers of the period will show that the poetic dialect of our speech, its flexibility, compass, and variety of expression, were

* I am not disposed to allow that the name of Wycliffe was but a myth, the impersonation of a school of reformers, and I think we may well be slow in adopting the theory which reconciles the discrepancies between the different accounts of the life of the great English apostle, by the supposition that there were two or more Wycliffes, as in Greek mythology there was a plurality of Herakles. Still, the extreme uncertainty of the evidence which identifies any existing manuscript as an actual production of the translator Wycliffe, and the great stylistic differences between the works usually ascribed to him, require us to use great caution in speaking of the characteristics of his diction. In general, when I cite the authority of Wycliffe, I refer to the *elder* of the two versions of the *New Testament* printed in the Wycliffe translations, Oxford, 1850.

developed by him to such an extraordinary degree, that there are few instances in the history of literature where a single writer has exerted so great, and in one direction at least, so beneficial an influence on the language of his time, as Chaucer. Langland, Gower, Chaucer, and Wycliffe belong chronologically to the same period, but the secular poets and the religious reformers moved in different spheres, addressed themselves to different audiences, and the vocabulary and style of each are modified by the circumstances under which he wrote, and the subject on which he was employed. Gower and Chaucer, writing for ladies and cavaliers, used the phraseology most likely to be intelligible and acceptable to courtiers, while Wycliffe and the author of the *Ploughman* were aiming to bring before the popular mind the word of God and the abuses of the church. The vocabulary of the reformers, both in prose and verse, is drawn almost wholly from homely Anglo-Saxon and the habitual language of religious life, while the lays of Gower and Chaucer are more freely decorated with the flowers of an exotic and artificial phraseology.* Wycliffe and his

* Notwithstanding the amount of poetical embellishment in Chaucer's works, he actually employs a smaller percentage of Latin and French words than the author of *Piers Ploughman*, though the *general* difference in this respect is perhaps less than the computation given in *Lecture VI.* would indicate. The dialect of *Piers Ploughman* has been popularly supposed to be more thoroughly Anglo-Saxon than that of Chaucer, because the former uses very many native words not found in the latter, and which are now obsolete; but in point of fact, Chaucer's style is quite as idiomatic as that of Langland, if tried by either an Anglo-Saxon or a modern English standard.

There is no doubt a strong resemblance between the general diction of this poet and of Gower. The etymological proportions of their vocabularies are not widely different, nor are the grammatical discordances between them very great. But in the choice of words as determined by subject, in metrical construction, in poetic coloring, in compass, variety, beauty, and appositeness of illustration, in dramatic power, in nice perception of character, and in justness of thought, the superiority of Chaucer is almost immeasurable. A reader who should note the passages in his works, which in point of thought or expression are particularly suited to serve as effective quotations, would find on reviewing his list, that no English writer except Shakespeare, has uttered so many striking and pithy *sentences* as Chaucer.

Few of his greater qualities were inherited by his immediate successors. The influence of his *style* is perceptible enough in the poetic diction of all after ages; but it is strange that the following century should have given birth to almost nothing better than what, in spite of the ingenious arguments of Skelton's defenders, I must still characterize as the wretched ribaldry of that author.

associates, in their biblical translations, use few foreign words not transplanted directly from the Latin Vulgate, but in their own original writings they employ as large a proportion of Romance vocables as occurs in those of Chaucer's works where they are most numerous. In the Squire's Tale, nine per cent. of the words are of Continental origin, in the Nonnes Prestes Tale the proportion falls to seven, while in the prose Persones Tale,* a religious homily, it rises to eleven. The diction of Chaucer in the Persones Tale does not differ very essentially from that of other religious writers of the same period. It is by no means the *proportion* of foreign words which distinguishes the dialect of Chaucer's poems from the common literary dialect of the times. It is the selection of his vocabulary, and the structure of his periods, that mark his style as his own, and it is a curious fact, that of the small number of foreign words employed by him and by Gower, a large share were in a manner forced upon them by the necessities of rhyme; for while not less than ninety parts in a hundred of their vocabularies are pure Anglo-Saxon, more than one-fourth of the terminal words of their verses are Latin or French.

Englishmen have sometimes looked back with regret to the loss of the splendid conquests of Edward III., and the older English provinces on the east and south of the channel, but there can be little doubt that the surrender of territory was a gain, so far as respects the unity and harmony of national character, the development of the language, and the creation of an independent literature. The first effect of the great victories of that reign, no doubt, was to stimulate the national pride of England, and to clothe every thing properly indigenous with new respectability and value. It is perhaps to this feeling that we are to ascribe the statute of the thirty-ninth year of Edward III., which prescribed that pleas should be pleaded, as well as debated and judged, in English, though they were to be enrolled in Latin. The self-conscious spirit of Anglo-Saxon nationality was for the moment thoroughly roused, but the nobility and gentry were

* The Persones Tale is substantially a version of a Latin work of Albertano di Brescia, composed about the middle of the thirteenth century and translated into the Tuscan dialect a very few years later. By singular good fortune, this work of Albertano's is thus among the earliest prose monuments of both English and Italian literature.

largely of Norman extraction, and still attached to their hereditary speech. The statute does not appear to have been much regarded in practice, and French and Latin continued to be the official languages, for a long time after. From the Norman Conquest to the twenty-fifth year of Edward I., 1297, all parliamentary enactments were recorded and promulgated in Latin. From that date to the third year of Henry VII., in 1487, they are almost wholly in French, and thereafter only in English, but the records of judicial proceedings were made up in Latin down to a much later date; and in fact England was never thoroughly Anglicized, until its political connection with the continent was completely severed.

“Had the Plantagenets,” observes Macaulay, “as at one time seemed likely, succeeded in uniting all France under their government, it is probable that England would never have had an independent existence. The noble language of Milton and Burke would have remained a rustic dialect without a literature, a fixed grammar, or a fixed orthography, and would have been contemptuously abandoned to the boors. No man of English extraction would have risen to eminence, except by becoming in speech and in habits a Frenchman.”

Analogous, though certainly not identical, consequences, would have followed from the failure of the Reformers to release England from her allegiance to the Papal see; for the mighty intellectual struggle, which shook Christendom in the sixteenth century, had a powerful influence in rousing the English mind to vigorous action, throwing it back on its own resources, and compelling it to bring out whatever of strength and efficiency was inherent in the national mind and the national speech. Tyndale's Testament was, for its time, as important a gift to the English people, as was King James's translation (of which indeed Tyndale's forms the staple), fourscore years later; and in the theological controversies of that century our mother-tongue acquired and put forth a compass of vocabulary, a force and beauty of diction, and a power of precise logical expression, of which scarce any other European tongue was then capable, and which the best English writers of later centuries can hardly be said to have surpassed.

LECTURE VIII.

THE VOCABULARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

I

THE Anglo-Saxon represents at once the material substratum and the formative principle of the English language. You may eliminate all the other ingredients, and there still subsists a speech, of itself sufficient for all the great purposes of temporal and spiritual life, and capable of such growth and development from its own native sources, and by its own inherent strength, as to fit it also for all the factitious wants and new-found conveniences of the most artificial stages of human society. If, on the other hand, you strike out the Saxon element, there remains but a jumble of articulate sounds without coherence, syntactic relation, or intelligible significance. But though possessed of this inexhaustible mine of native metal, we have rifled the whole *orbis verborum*, the world of words, to augment our overflowing stores, so that every speech and nation under heaven has contributed some jewels to enrich our cabinet, or, at the least, some humble implement to facilitate the communication essential to the proper discharge of the duties, and the performance of the labors, of moral and material life. These foreign conquests, indeed, have not been achieved, these foreign treasures won, without some shedding of Saxon blood, some sacrificing of domestic coin, and if we have gained largely in vocabulary, we have, for the time at least, lost no small portion of that original constructive power, whereby we could have fabricated a nomenclature scarcely less wide and diversified than that which we have borrowed from so distant and multiplied sources. English no longer exercises, though we may hope it still possesses, the protean gift of transformation, which could at pleasure *verbalize* a noun, whether substantive or adjective, and the contrary; we have dropped the variety of

significant endings, which indicated not only the grammatical character, but the grammatical relations, of the words of the period, and with them sacrificed the power of varying the arrangement of the sentence according to the emphasis, so as always to use the right word in the right place; we have suffered to perish a great multitude of forcible descriptive terms; and finally we no longer enjoy the convenience of framing at pleasure new words out of old and familiar material, by known rules of derivation and composition, but are able to increase our vocabulary only by borrowing from foreign and, for the most part, unallied sources. Nevertheless, in the opinion of able judges, our gains, upon the whole, so far at least as the vocabulary is concerned, more than balance our losses. Our language has become more copious, more flexible, more refined, and capable of greater philosophical precision and a wider variety of expression.

The introduction of foreign words and foreign idioms has made English less easy of complete mastery to ourselves, and its mixed character is one reason why, in general, even educated English and Americans speak less well than Continental scholars; but, on the other hand, the same composite structure renders it less difficult for foreigners, and thus it is eminently fitted to be the speech of two nations, one of which counts among its subjects, the other among its citizens, people of every language and every clime.

Our losses are greatest in the poetic dialect, nor have they, in this department, except for didactic and epic verse, been at all balanced by our acquisitions from the Latin and the French, or rather from the former through the latter. We have suffered in the vocabulary suited to idyllic and to rural poetry, in the language of the domestic affections, and the sensibilities of everyday social life. In short, while the nomenclature of art has been enriched, the voice of nature has grown thin and poor; and at the same time, in the loss of the soft inflections of the Saxon grammar, English prosody has sustained an injury which no variety of foreign terminations can compensate. The recovery and restoration of very many half-forgotten and wholly unsupplied Saxon words, and of some of the melodious endings which gave such variety and charm to rhyme, is yet possible, and it is here that I look for one of the greatest benefits to our literature from

the study of our ancient mother-tongue. Even Chaucer, whom a week's labor will make almost as intelligible as Dryden, might furnish our bards an ample harvest, and a knowledge of the existing remains of Anglo-Saxon literature would enable us to give to our poetic vocabulary and our rhythm a compass and a beauty surpassed by that of no modern tongue. It is remarkable that Ben Jonson, in lamenting the disappearance of the old verbal plural ending *-en*, as, they *loven*, they *complainen*, instead of they *love*, they *complain*—a form which he says he “dares not presume to set afoot again, though the lack thereof, well considered, will be found a great blemish to our tongue,”—should confine the expression of his regret solely to the loss of a grammatical sign, without adverting to the superior rhythmical beauty and convenience of the obsolete form. Early English inherited from the Saxon numerous terminations of case, number, and person, with an obscure vowel or liquid final, constituting trochaic feet, and the loss of these has compelled us to substitute spondaic measures to an extent which singularly interferes with the melody of our versification. Thus in Chaucer's time, the adjectives *all*, *small*, and the like, and the preterite of the strong verbs, had a form in *e* obscure, which served as a sign of the plural. The *e* final in these and other words was articulated as it now is in French poetry, except before words beginning with a vowel or with *h*, and thus what we should write and pronounce, prosaically,

And small fowls make melody
That sleep all the night with open eye,

becomes metrical as written by Chaucer, and pronounced by his contemporaries :

And smālē fōwlēs māken mēlōdte,
Thāt slēpēn āl thē night wīth ōpēn yēhe.

But this point will be more properly considered in a subsequent part of our course.

It has been observed in all literatures, that the poetry and the prose which take the strongest hold of the heart of a nation are usually somewhat archaic in diction; behind, rather than in advance of, the fashionable language of the time. They are the mellow wine of the national thought: “the old is better.” The reason of this is that the great mass of every people is slow to

adopt changes in its vocabulary. New words are introduced, and long exclusively employed, in circles that are rather excrescences upon society than essential constituents of it; while old words cling to the tongue of the stable multitude, and are understood and felt by it long after they have ceased to be current and intelligible among the changeful coteries that assume to dictate the speech, as well as the opinions and the manners, of their generation. Deep in the recesses of our being, beneath even the reach of consciousness, or at least of objective self-inspection, there lies a certain sensibility to the organic laws of our mother-tongue, and to the primary significance of its vocabulary, which tells us when obsolete, unfamiliar words are fitly used; and the logical power of interpreting words by the context, acts with the greatest swiftness and certainty when it is brought to bear on the material of our native speech. The popular mind shrinks from new words, as from aliens not yet rightfully entitled to a place in our community, while antiquated and half-forgotten native vocables, like trusty friends returning after an absence so long that their features are but dimly remembered, are welcomed with double warmth, when once their history and their worth are brought back to our recollection. So tenaciously do ancient words and ancient forms adhere to the national mind, that persons of little culture, but of good linguistic perceptions, will not unfrequently follow old English or Scottish authors with greater intelligence than will grammarians trained to the exact study of written forms, and I have known self-educated women, who read Chaucer and Burns with a relish and an appreciation rare among persons well schooled in classic lore.

Doubtless the too free use of archaisms is an abuse; but the errors which have been committed by modern writers in this way have generally been not so much in employing too large a proportion of older words, as in applying them to new objects, thoughts, and conditions.

The author of "Nothing to Wear" would have committed a serious violation of the laws of propriety and good taste, if he had adopted the dialect of the sixteenth century in that fine satire, to which, what is currently called the local color of the composition gives so much point. On the other hand, the judicious use of antiquated words and forms in the *Castle of Indolence*, an im-

aginative conception altogether in harmony with the tone of an earlier age, has clothed that exquisite creation with a charm which renders it more attractive than almost any other poetical production of the last century.

The English author who has most affected archaism of phraseology is Spenser, but if he had confined himself to the use of roots and inflections which ever were true English, instead of coining words and forms to suit his metre and his rhyme, he would have escaped something of the censure which his supposed too conservative love of the reverend and the old brought upon him, at the close of a period during which, more than ever after the time of Chaucer, the language had been in a state of metamorphosis and transition.*

* Spenser wanted not able defenders in his own time, and the argument of one of them is worth listening to as an exposition of the views of a good scholar, at an important crisis in the history of the English language, and as in itself a characteristic specimen of the euphuism which was then a fashionable style of literary composition.

“And first of the wordes to speake, I graunt they bee something hard, and of most men unused, yet both English, and also used of most excellent authors, and most famous poets. On whom, when as this our Poet hath bin much travailed and thoroughly read, how could he be (as that worthie Oratour sayde), but that walking in the Sunne, although for other cause he walked, yet needes he mought be sunburnt; and having the sound of those auncient poets still ringing in his eares, he mought needes, in singing, hit out some of their tunes.

“Sure I thinke, and thinke I think not amisse, that they bring great grace, and, as one would say, authoritie to the verse. For albe, amongst many other faults, it specially be objected of Valla against Livie, and of other against Salust, that with over much studie they affect antiquitie, as covering thereby credence and honour of elder yeares; yet I am of opinion, and eke the best learned are of the like, that those auncient solemne words are a great ornament, both in the one, and in the other.

“Ofittimes an ancient worde maketh the stile seeme grave, and as it were reverend, no otherwise than we honor and reverence gray haire for a certaine religious regard which we have of old age.

“But if any will rashly blame his purpose in choice of olde and unwonted wordes, him may I more iustly blame and condemne, or of witlesse headiness in iudging, or of heedless hardiness in condemning, for in my opinion it is one especiall praise, of many which are due to this poet, that he hath labored to restore as to their rightful heritage such good and naturall English wordes, as have beene long time out of use, and almost cleane disherited. Which is the only cause, that our mother-tongue, which truly of itself is both full inough for prose and stately enough for verse, hath long time beene counted most bare

Ben Jonson sings :

“ Then it chimes,
When the old words do strike on the new times,”

and he has happily conceived, and happily expressed in prose, the true rule for the selection of words in writings designed for permanence of duration and effect.

“ We must not,” says he, “ be too frequent with the mint, every day coining, nor fetch words from the extreme and utmost ages. Words borrowed of antiquity do lend a kind of majesty to style, and are not without their delight sometimes. For they have the authority of years, and out of their intermission do win to themselves a kind of grace-like newness. But the eldest of the *present*, and newest of the *past* language is best.”

To ascertain the number of words in use at any given time, is a matter of great difficulty. As I have observed in a former lecture, new words are constantly making their appearance, and of these, while the greater part are forgotten with the occasions which produced them, some, from the great importance and abiding influence of those events, or from their own inherent expressiveness, become permanent additions to the language. The introduction of new words can scarcely fail to be marked, but the disappearance of old and established expressions is not a thing of so easy observation. The mere *non-user* of a word is not likely to be noticed until it has been so long out of currency that it strikes us as unfamiliar when met with in authors of an earlier period. Nor does the fact, that a word is not actually employed at a particular epoch, prove it to be permanently obsolete.

and barren of both. Which default when as some endeavoured to salve and recure, they patched up the holes with peeces and rags of other languages, borrowing here of the French, there of the Italian, every where of the Latin ; not weighing how all these tongues accord with themselves but much worse with ours : so now they have made our English tong a gallimaufry, or hodge-podge of all other speeches.

“ Other, some not so well seene in the English tongue, as perhaps in other languages, if they happen to hear an olde word, albeit very naturall and significant, cry out straightway, that we speake no English but gibberish, or rather such as in olde time Evander’s mother spake ; whose first shame is that they are not ashamed, in their own mother-tongue to be counted strangers and aliens. The second shame no less than the first, that whatso they understand not, they streightway deeme to be senselesse and not at all to be understoode.”

Multa renascentur quæ jam cecidere, cadentque,
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula.

Words are constantly passing temporarily out of use, and resuming their place in literature again; and this occasional suspended animation of words, followed by a revival and restoration to full activity, is one of the most curious facts in their history. But this subject belongs to another part of our course, and we shall resume it hereafter. We can never overlook at once our whole contemporaneous literature, and of course we can never say how extensive its active vocabulary is, nor how far its gains, which we see and can estimate, are compensated by losses which escape our notice. Such computations no generation can make for itself, and the balance can be struck only by the successor.

There is one verbal revolution which is more within the scope of familiar observation. I refer to that change by which words once refined, elegant, and even solemn, come to suggest trivial, vulgar, or ludicrous thoughts or images. Spenser, in speaking of an encounter between two armies or single knights, often says, they "let drive," or "rushed full drive, at each other," and both he and later writers, even to the time of Dryden, describe, in pathetic passages, a lady as having her face "blubbered with tears." The phrase "not to be named the same day," now very inelegant, occurs in Abel Redivivus; and the grave Hooker warns sinners of the danger of "popping down into the pit." *Fellow*, originally meaning simply a *companion*, is now often a term of offence. Hooker and Shakespeare use *companion*, now become respectable, as expressive of contempt, in the same way as we use *fellow*, and it is remarkable that in almost all the European languages, the word corresponding to *fellow* is employed chiefly in a disparaging signification, as in German, *Gesell*; in Italian, *Chi è questo compagno?*

Party, for person, now a vulgarism, occurs in the *Memorials of the Empire of Japan*, published by the Hakluyt Society, p. 55, and very frequently in Holland and other authors of his time. "Apelles, not knowing the name of the *partie* who had brought him thither," &c., &c. * * "but the king presently tooke knowledge thereby of the *partie* that had played this pranke by him," &c., &c. Holland's Pliny, II. 539, E.

When a distinguished American politician expressed a willingness, under certain circumstances, to "let the Constitution slide," he was criticised almost as severely for the undignified character of the expression, as for the supposed unpatriotic sentiment; but he had the authority of Chaucer and Shakespeare for the language, if not for the thought. Young Lord Walter, in the Clerkes Tale, was so devoted to hawking, that

Wel neigh all other cures let he slyde ;

the disconsolate Dorigene in the Frankeleines Tale was fain at last to

Lete hire sorwe *slide* ;

and Sly, in the Taming of the Shrew,

Lets the world *slide*.

Gower also, II. 3, says :

Thus haue I lette time *slide*
For slouthes ;

and again, III. 61 :

The high creator * *
* * * *
Full many wonder worldes chaunce
Let *slide* under his sufferance.

Very many humble colloquialisms current in this country, but not now used in England, and generally supposed to be Americanisms, are, after all, of good old British family, and our Eastern friends, who are sometimes ridiculed for talking of a *sight* of people, may find comfort in learning that the famous old romance, the prose Morte d'Arthur, uses this word for *multitude*, and that the high-born dame, Juliana Berners, lady prioress of the nunnery of Sopwell in the fifteenth century, informs us that in her time a *bomynable syght of monkes* was elegant English for, 'a large company of friars.' Dampier, 1703, has "*clear* round"; and also *fiar* apparently in the New England sense. "We went ashore and dried our cloaths, cleaned our guns, dried our ammunition, and *fiar* ourselves against our enemies if we should be attacked."

To feel *of*, occurs in Knox's Ceilon bearing the date 1681. "They usually gather them before they be full ripe, boreing an hole in them, and *feeling of* the kernel, they know if they be ripe enough for their purpose."

Tonguey (*tungy*), formerly common, and still sometimes used, in New England in the sense of fluent in speech, eloquent, occurs in the older text of the Wycliffe version of Ecclesiasticus. The later text has *janglerie* instead.

No living language yet possesses a dictionary so complete as to give all the words in use at any one period, still less all those that have belonged to it during the whole extent of its literary history. We cannot therefore arrive at any precise results as to the comparative copiousness of our own and other languages, but there is reason to think that the vocabulary of English is among the most extensive now employed by man.

The number of English words not yet obsolete, but found in good authors or in approved usage by correct speakers, including the nomenclature of science and the arts, does not probably fall short of one hundred thousand.* Now there are persons who know this vocabulary in nearly its whole extent, but they understand a large proportion of it much as they are acquainted with Greek or Latin, that is, as the dialect of books or of special arts or professions, and not as a living speech, the common language of daily and hourly thought. Or if, like some celebrated English and American orators, living and dead, they are able, upon occasion, to bring into the field in the war of words even the half of this vast array of light and heavy troops, yet they habitually content themselves with a much less imposing display of verbal force, and use for ordinary purposes but a very small proportion of the words they have at their command. Out of our immense magazine of words and their combinations, every man selects his own implements and weapons, and we should find in the verbal repertory of each individual, were it once fairly laid open to us, a key that would unlock many mysteries of his particular humanity,

* In this estimate I include technical terms only so far as they have become a part of the general vocabulary of all cultivated persons. If we add all the *special* terms of every science and every art, the number of English words would be far beyond one hundred thousand.

many secrets of his private history, so that 'by his *words* he might be justified, and by his *words* he might be condemned.'

Few writers or speakers use as many as ten thousand words, ordinary persons of fair intelligence not above three or four thousand. If a scholar were to be required to name, without examination, the authors whose English vocabulary was the largest, he would probably specify the all-embracing Shakespeare, and the all-knowing Milton. And yet in all the works of the great dramatist, there occur not more than fifteen thousand words, in the poems of Milton not above eight thousand. The whole number of Egyptian hieroglyphic symbols does not exceed eight hundred, and the entire Italian operative vocabulary has been said to be scarcely more extensive.

To those whose attention has not been turned to the subject, these are surprising facts, but if we run over a few pages of a dictionary, and observe how great a proportion of the words are such as we do not ourselves individually use, we shall be forced to conclude that we each find a very limited vocabulary sufficient for our own purposes. Although we have few words absolutely synonymous, yet every important thought, image, and feeling has numerous allied, if not equivalent, forms of expression, and out of these every man appropriates and almost exclusively employs those which most closely accord with his own mental constitution, his tastes and opinions, the style of his favorite authors, or which best accommodate themselves to the rest of his habitual phraseology. One man will say a *thankful heart*, another a *grateful spirit*; one usually employs *fancy* where another would say *imagination*; one describes a friend as a person of a *sanguine temperament*, another speaks of him as a man of a *hopeful spirit*; one *regards* a winter passage around Cape Horn as a *very hazardous voyage*, another *considers* it a *peculiarly dangerous trip*. One man *begins to build*, another *commences building*.* Men of

* *Commence* is used by good writers only as a transitive verb, and as such requires the participle or participial noun, not the infinitive, after it. The phrase I *commence to build*, now occasionally employed, is therefore not sanctioned by respectable authority. At the same time there is no valid *grammatical* objection to its use. The French, from whom we borrowed this verb, say *commencer à parler*, or *commencer de parler*, according to circumstances, and our restriction of it to a technically transitive character is purely conventional.

moderate passions employ few epithets, with verbs and substantives of mild significations; excitable men use numerous intensives, and words of strong and stirring meanings. Loose thinkers content themselves with a single expression for a large class of related ideas; logical men scrupulously select the precise word which corresponds to the thought they utter, and yet among persons of but average intelligence, each understands, though not himself employing, the vocabulary of all the rest. The demands of pure and of physical science, and of mechanical art, for a more extended nomenclature wherewith to chronicle their progress and aid in their diffusion, are at present giving occasion to a more ample coinage of new words than are supplied from any other source. Science, with the exception of Geology, borrows its vocabulary chiefly from Greek and Latin sources; mechanical art, to some extent from the same languages, but it has more generally taken its technical terms from native, though often very obscure, roots. The number of words of art which the last half century has thus introduced into English is very great, and a large proportion of them are sought for in vain in our most voluminous dictionaries. Indeed, it is surprising how slowly the commonest mechanical terms find their way into dictionaries professedly complete. I may mention, as instances of this, that *penny*, a denomination of the sizes of nails, as a six-penny, or a ten-penny nail, though it was employed by Featly two hundred years ago, and has been in constant use ever since, is not to be found in Webster;* and the great French and Italian dictionary

* "He fell fierce and foule upon the Pope himselfe, threatening to loosen him from his chayre, though he were fastened thereto with a *tenpenny* nail."—Life of Abbot, Abel Redivivus, 546.

Six-penny, eight-penny, ten-penny nails, are nails of such sizes, that a thousand will weigh six, eight, or ten pounds, and in this phrase, therefore, penny seems to be a corruption of pound.

Weidenfeld, *Secrets of the Adepts*, uses *penny* for duodecimal part: "Of the white likewise, one was to be of *ten-penny*, another of eleven, another of sterling silver," &c., &c.—Address to Students (15). Here *ten-penny* silver is silver ten-twelfths fine.

There is a very common and very proper expression, *pair of stairs*, which the dictionaries and the sciolistic pride of precisians in speech generally reject as a vulgar inaccuracy. This phrase is used by Palsgrave, Hakluyt, Shakespeare, and George Sandys, and it is found in the Memoirs of Scriblerus, as well as in many English classics of the best age of our literature. The fancied in-

of Alberti, in the edition of 1835, does not contain the word for *steam-boat* in either language.

The rapid advance of the natural sciences has required, in all European languages, the creation of a great number of new words to designate new scientific ideas and newly discovered material objects. On the formation of this nomenclature, different philological principles have been adopted at different times and by dif-

correctness lies in a supposed misapprehension of the meaning of *stair*, which those who criticize the phrase imagine to be synonymous with *step* or *tread*. But this is a mistake. The Anglo-Saxon *stæger*, whence our *stair*, is derived from the verb *stigan*, to *ascend* or *climb*, which, in the form *sty* or *stie*, was in use as an English verb as late as the time of Spenser. *Stæger* and *stair*, though sometimes confounded with *step*, properly signify alike the entire system of successive *steps* by which we *sty* or climb from one floor to another, and they may therefore be considered as collective nouns. Thus Milton, *Paradise Lost*, iii., 540-3 :

Satan from hence, now on the lower *stair*,
That scaled by *steps* of gold to heaven gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once.

But it is usual to divide the *stair*, when the height of the stories is considerable, into flights or sections separated by landing-places, and each flight might not improperly be considered an independent *stair*. Now in the great majority of stairs, there was but one intermediate landing-place, and of course the whole ascent from floor to floor was divided into two flights or *stairs*, and thus formed a *pair* of *stairs*.

In the Supplement to the last edition of Webster, in which this expression is justified, it is suggested that it originated in the use of *pair* to designate, not a couple, but "any number of *pares*, or equal things that go together"; as "a *pair* (set) of chessmen, a *pair* (pack) of cards." This is a plausible, and perhaps the true explanation; but nevertheless, as *stairs* did not mean *steps*, but *flights of steps*, I think the theory I have proposed upon the whole more probable. The Gloss. of Arch., I. 242, gives this quotation from William of Worcester: * "a hygh grese called a *steyr* of xxxii. *stoppys*," which corresponds to Milton's use of the words.

The French use the prepositions *de* and *en* to express the relation between an object and the material of which it is made: as, *un pont de pierre* un palais en marbre, une statue en bronze. Doubtless the preposition *de* is the more proper of the two; nevertheless, *en* is very frequently employed instead, both colloquially and by many of the best writers in the language. But neither in the French-English Dictionary of Fleming and Tibbins, nor in the much more complete Dictionnaire National of Bescherelle, is this use of the preposition *en* noticed.

* See Arnold's Chronicle, p. 116.

ferent nations. So far as we can penetrate the darkness which surrounds the origin of language, the names of all objects, whether animate or inanimate, appear to have been originally, if not imitative, at least descriptive. The earliest modern European naturalists did not resort directly to imitation, but framed new words from Greek or Latin roots to compose their nomenclature. Many languages have a great number of terms of unknown, or at least of disputed, etymology which are employed as descriptive appellations of natural formations, for example, *polinje*, *tundra*, *steppe*, *fjäll* *ås*, *åsarpl*, *chuse*, *wadi*, have been largely employed as convenient terms, not only in their widely separated birth-places, but in almost all European languages, to designate objects familiar to modern geographers. There are two schools of nomenclature in modern science; one forms such barbarous terms as *acanthopterygii pharingognathi* from Greek primitives familiar to classic scholars, but which in their compound form would have sorely puzzled an ancient Greek naturalist; the other school, embracing chiefly the Germans and Scandinavians, though employing native and intelligible roots as its material, is even more obscure in its terminology than the former. There is a third class of word-makers who prefer to employ the name of scientific observers as appellatives of objects belonging to them by right of discovery. Thus we have *Gay-Lussacia*, and *Asa-Græa*, as the names of botanic genera, introduced to the learned world by Gay-Lussac, and Prof. Asa Gray. There is still another class of names, which, like *Lucus a non lucendo*, are bestowed upon objects on account not of the possession but of the *absence* of the properties which might be expected to distinguish them. Thus *eucalyptus* is applied to an Australian tree, not because its foliage is abundant, but because, on the contrary, it appears to the eye unusually bare of leaves. The almost indiscriminate use of so many different systems, has led to great confusion in the vocabulary of modern science, and it is not strange that modern philosophers should have agreed in thinking it important to devise a system by which more precision should be given to the terminology of natural science, and that its technical vocabulary should be capable of readily accommodating itself to the orthography of the principal European languages, and thus become substantially universal.

The nomenclature of science is founded upon the necessity,

partly of new names for new things, and partly of more precise and exclusive designation of well-known things. It is obvious that when chemistry discovers a new element or elementary combination, physics a new law or principle, mathematics a new mode of ascertaining magnitudes or comparing quantities, new words must be coined in order properly to express the object discovered or process invented; but the need of new terms for familiar things, or properties of things, is not so clear to common apprehension. It is not at first sight evident that a botanist, in describing a smooth, shaggy, or bristly vegetable surface, is under the necessity of saying instead, that the leaf or stalk is *glabrous*, *hirsute*, or *hispid*; but a sufficient reason for the introduction of new terms into newly organized branches of knowledge, is to be found in the fact, that the common words of every living speech are popularly used in several distinct acceptations, some proper and some figurative. The purposes of natural science require that its nomenclature shall be capable of exact definition, and that every descriptive technical term be rigorously limited to the expression of the precise quality or mode of action to the designation of which it is applied. Now, though *smooth*, *shaggy*, and *bristly* may be, and often are, employed in senses precisely equivalent to those of *glabrous*, *hirsute*, and *hispid*, yet they have also other meanings and shades of meaning, and are almost always more or less vague in their signification, because, being relative in their nature, they are constantly referred to different standards of comparison. The Latin words which, in the dialect of botany, replace them, have, on the contrary, no signification except that which is imposed upon them by strict definition, and no degree of signification which is not fixed by reference to known and invariable types.

In a recent scientific journal, I find this sentence: "Begoniaceæ, by their anthero-connectival fabric indicate a close relationship with anonaceo-hydrocharideo-nymphæoid forms, an affinity confirmed by the serpentarioid flexuoso-nodulous stem, the liri-dendroid stipules, and cissoid and victorioid foliage of a certain Begonia, and if considered hypogynous, would, in their triquetrous capsule, alate seed, apetalism, and tufted stamination represent the floral fabric of Nepenthes, itself of aristolochioid affinity, while by its pitched leaves, directly belonging to Sarracenias and Dionæas."

And again, in Brandes' Dictionary: "*Illecebraceæ* (Illecebrum, one of the genera). A small natural order of hypogynous Exogens, belonging to the Silenial alliance, allied to *Portulacaceæ*, *Caryophyllaceæ* and *Amaranthaceæ*, and distinguished by having both calyx and corolla present and symmetrical, the latter rudimentary, and by its scarious stipules and amphitropical ovules. They are plants of no importance."

These extracts exemplify, in an instructive way, the application of new words to objects and features familiar in themselves, but which have only recently acquired a scientific value, and are interesting as showing to what extent the formation of compound and derivative words may be carried in English, when employed in the service of natural knowledge. Most of the descriptive epithets are derived from the scientific appellations of known species or genera, the names of which suggest to the botanist their characteristic forms. Where the particular form is common to two or three, the names of all are grouped in one compound, and the whole word terminated with the Greek syllable *-oid*, expressive of likeness.

Every one will recognize the immense advantage of the chemical scientific prefixes, *per*, *bi*, *ob*, *sub*, *super*, and the terminals, *ate*, *ide*, *ure*, *ic*, *ous*, with, to us moderns, insignificant roots. And yet with all this effort after exactness by the coinage of new terms, Quatrefages complains that the old words, *class*, *race*, *species*, *tribe*, *family*, &c., are too vague to serve the purpose of scientific discrimination. That they are at least very vaguely used, every reader of scientific books will readily testify.

The nomenclature of science is often so repugnant to the ear, and so refractory to the tongue of our Anglican race, that it never finds admission into the dialect of common life, but as the principles of abstract reasoning, and the facts of natural knowledge become more widely diffused, much of the vocabulary which belonged originally to the schools, escapes from its learned seclusion, and, generally with more or less modification of meaning, finally incorporates itself into the common language, the familiar speech of the people. At present the predominance of scientific pursuits is bestowing upon English a great number of words borrowed from the nomenclature, both of the various branches of natural history and of the more exact sciences of pure and mixed

mathematics. Thus, *conditions*, in the sense of the circumstances under which a given phenomenon takes place, and which may be supposed to modify its character, *problem*, *corollary*, *phenomenon*, *quantitative* and *qualitative*, *demonstrative*, *positive* and *negative*, the *mean between extremes*, *antipodal*, *zenith*, *inverse ratio*, and hundreds of other terms lately introduced for the special purposes of science, and denoting new, or at least unfamiliar, things and relations of things, have now become a part of the general vocabulary of all educated persons.*

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the questions which absorbed the thoughts of men, and shook the dynasties of Europe, were not those immediately affecting material interests, but those concerning the relations of man to his Maker, and of the subject to his rulers. Theology and civil polity, and, as a necessary preparation for the comprehension of both, metaphysical studies, were the almost exclusive pursuit of the great thinkers, the active intellects of that long period. The facts, the arguments, the authorities which bore upon these questions, were principally to be sought for in the ancient languages, and when the reasoning was to be employed to influence the unlearned, to be clothed in an English dress, and to be *popularized*, so to speak, it was at once discovered that the existing language was destitute of appropriate words to convey ideas so new to the English mind. The power of forming new words from indigenous roots by composition and derivation, retained by the cognate languages, had been lost or suspended in English; and, moreover, the Saxon primitives specially adapted for employment in this way, had been superseded by French words imported by the Norman nobility, or by a sectarian Latin phraseology introduced by the Romish ecclesiastics. Hence new vocables, and those almost uniformly of Greek or Latin etymology, were coined for use in theological and political discussion, and many of them soon became a constituent part of the general medium of thought. In fact, a complete

* *Exorbitant*, the Latin conjugate verb to which, *exorbito*, acquired a popular figurative sense even in the classic age of Rome, was originally a term of art applied to those heavenly bodies whose path deviated much from the plane of the *orbis* of the planets most familiar to ancient astronomy. It has now lost its technical meaning altogether, and has no longer a place in the dialect of science.

English metaphysical nomenclature was formed, and freely and familiarly used, by the great thinkers who lived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the materialistic age which followed, such portion of this vocabulary as was not already incorporated into the universal patrimony of the language, had become obsolete, and when, fifty years ago, Coleridge attempted to revive the forgotten study of metaphysics, he found that the current dialect of the day afforded no terms for the adequate expression of logical and philosophical categories. But a recurrence to the religious philosophy of a more intellectual age, showed that the English metaphysicians of that period had, in great part, anticipated a nomenclature which has been supposed to be the invention of German speculators and their followers. *Reason* and *understanding*, as words denominative of distinct faculties, the adjectives *sensuous*, *transcendental*, *subjective* and *objective*, *supernatural* as an appellation of the spiritual—or that immaterial essence which is not subject to the law of cause and effect, and is thus distinguished from that which is *natural*—are all words revived, not invented by the school of Coleridge.*

In the mean time, and down to the present day, the rapid progress of physical science and industrial art has given birth to a great multitude of technical terms, a large part of which, in more or less appropriate applications, or in figurative senses, has entered into the speech of every-day life. Thus the means of articulate and written communication upon more familiar as well as more recondite subjects have been vastly extended, even since the period when Shakespeare showed, by an experimental test, that English was already capable of exhibiting almost every conceivable phase of internal and external being in our common humanity.

* The following extract from Sir Kenelm Digby's *Observations on Sir Thomas Browne's Religio Medici* is, both in manner and in matter, worthy of some much later metaphysicians :

“ If God should join the Soul of a lately dead man (even whilst his dead corps should lie entire in his winding sheet here), unto a body made of earth taken from some mountain in America, it were most true and certain that the body he then should live by, were the same identical body he lived with before his death and late resurrection. It is evident that *sameness*, *thianness*, and *thatness*, belongeth not to matter by itself (for a general indifference runneth through it all) ; but only as it is distinguished and individuated by the form, which in our case whensoever the soul doth, it must be understood always to be the same matter and body.”

The permanent literature of a given period is not a true index of the general vocabulary of the period, for the exemption of great works from the fleeting interests and passions that inspire the words of their own times, is one of the very circumstances that insure their permanence. That which is to live for ever must appeal to more catholic and lasting sympathies than those immediately belonging to the special concerns of any era, however pregnant it may be with great consequences to the weal or the woe of man.

The dialects of the field, the market, and the fireside in former ages have left but an imperfect record behind them, and they are generally to be traced only in the scanty pages of the comic dramatist, and in the few fragments of private correspondence that antiquarian curiosity has rescued from destruction. But, for a century, the historical novel, and the periodical press, in its various forms of newspaper, solid review, and light magazine, have embodied the mutable speech of the hour, in its widest range of vocabulary, phraseological expression, and proverb. While, therefore, we do not possess satisfactory means of testing the humors, the aims, the morals of our remoter ancestors by the character of their familiar speech, we have, in the lighter literature of later years, ample means of detecting the unconscious expression of the mental and moral tendencies, which have marked the age of our fathers and our own.

LECTURE IX.

VOCABULARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

II.

FOR the purpose of obtaining a comprehensive view of particular branches of knowledge, and of determining the special relations which subsist between them all, modern science has found the form of generalization termed *classification*, a very efficient, not to say a necessary, instrument. In fact orderly, and what may be called progressive, arrangement, is considered so essential a feature in all scientific method, that the principles of classification have been made the subject of much profound investigation and philosophic discussion, and they may be said to have been erected into a science of themselves. As an auxiliary to the comprehension of a given classification, and especially as a help to the memory in retaining it, a systematic, and as some hold, so far as possible a descriptive, nomenclature is indispensable. The wide range of recent physical science, and the extent to which, in its various applications, it enters into and pervades the social life of the age, have made its dialect in some sort a common medium of intercommunication between men of different races and tongues. And thus Linnæus, the father of modern botany and zoology, and Lavoisier, who occupies a scarcely less conspicuous position in the history of modern chemistry, have indirectly exercised almost as important an influence on the language, as, directly, upon the science of succeeding generations. A full discussion of the principles of scientific nomenclature would be too wide a digression from the path of inquiry marked out for the present course, but it will be useful to notice some misapplications of them, and I shall have occasion to recur again to the subject, in treating of the parts of speech.*

* See Lecture xiv.

I will precede what I have now to say in relation to it, by some remarks on the classification of languages, and on derivation and composition in English. Languages have been variously classed according to their elements, their structure, their power of self-development, their historical origin or their geographical distribution. But the application of scientific principle to the comparison of different languages, or families of language, is so new a study that no one system of arrangement can yet be said to have received the assent of scholars, in any other way than as a provisional distribution. The nomenclature of the different branches of linguistic knowledge, phonology, derivative etymology, inflection and syntax, is perhaps still more unsettled, and almost every Continental grammarian proposes a new set of names for even the parts of speech. So far is the passion for anatomizing, describing, and naming, carried, that some philologists, as for instance Becker, divide, subdivide, distinguish, and specify language and its elements, until it is almost a greater effort to master and retain the analysis and its nomenclature, than to learn the grammatical forms and syntactical rules of the speech to which they are applied. I doubt the practical value of methods so artificial as to elevate the technicalities of art above art itself, and I shall, throughout this course, which I have more than once described as altogether introductory and preparatory, confine myself, as far as practicable, to old and familiar appellations of all that belongs to the description of language and the elements which compose it.

Among the various classifications of language, not the most scientific certainly, but one of the most obvious, is that which looks at them with reference to their power of enlarging their vocabulary by varying and compounding native radicals, or in other words, their organic law of growth. This classification is incomplete, because it respects words considered as independent and individual, leaving syntactical structure and other important points altogether out of view; but, as we are now considering the vocabulary, it is for our present purpose the most convenient arrangement.

Derivation, in its broadest sense, includes all processes by which new words are formed from given roots. In ordinary language, however, grammatical inflections are not embraced in the term, and it may be added, that where the primitive and the derivative

belong to the same language, there is usually a change of form, a change of grammatical class, and a change of relative import.* I shall, at present, speak only of derivation from native roots. A radical, which, in its simplest form and use, serves only as an attributive, in other words an adjective, may be made to denote the quality which it ascribes, or an act by which that quality is manifested or imparted, and thus become a noun or a verb; or contrariwise, a root which affirms the doing of an act, the being in a state, or the consciousness of a sensation or emotion, and of course a verb, may become the name of an agent, a quality, or a condition. Thus, to take the first case supposed, *red* is the simplest form in which that root is known to the English language, and in that form it is an adjective denoting that the object to which it is applied possesses a certain color. If we add to this root the syllable *-ness*, forming the derivative *redness*, the new word means the power of producing upon the eye the sensation excited by red objects; it becomes the name of that color, and is a substantive. If instead of that ending, we add the syllable *-den*, which gives us *redden*, the derivative signifies to become red, or to make red, and is a verb. So in the other case, the verb *admire*, (which for the present purpose may be treated as a radical,) signifying to regard with wonder or surprise mingled with respect or affection, by the addition of the consonant *-r*, becomes a substantive, *admirer*, and denotes a person entertaining the sentiment I have just defined. In the form *admiration*, it is also a substantive, indicating the consciousness or expression of that sentiment, and if changed to *admirable*, it becomes an adjective expressing the possession of qualities which excite admiration, or entitle objects to be admired. In all these cases, the modified words are said to be derived from, or to be derivatives of, the simple radical, and they are changed in form by the addition of a syllable. But the change of form may be made in a different way, namely, by the substitution of

* Hence the notion of grammar as a test of identity of language—whether it is an ethnological test is quite another question.

There is not always a change of *form*, as will be seen hereafter, nor is there necessarily a change of grammatical *class*. The noun *auctioneer* is derived from the noun *auction*; and again, *since* is derived from *sithence*, and that from a still older form, without any change of either *class* or *meaning*. See Lecture xiv.

other letters, usually vowels, for some of those of the radical. Thus from the verb *bind*, we have, by a change of vowel, the substantives *band* and *bond*, all expressing the same radical notion; from the verb *think*, by a change of both vowel and consonant, the substantive *thought*; from the verb *see*, by a like change, the substantive *sight*; from the verb to *freeze*, the substantive *frost*; from the substantive *glass* and *grass*, by a change of the spoken not the written vowel, the verbs to *glaze* and to *graze*. Thus far the change of grammatical class has been indicated by a change of form, and this is the usual but not the constant process of derivation. There are still many instances, and in earlier stages of English there were many more, where a radical is employed in a new class, without a change of form. Thus the substantive *man*, without the alteration of a letter, becomes a verb, and we may say to *man* a *ship*; so from *arm*, to *arm* a *fortress*; from *saddle*, *bit*, and *bridle*, to *saddle*, *bit*, or *bridle* a horse; and the Morte d'Arthur speaks of a knight as being well *sworded* and well *shielded*, using participial forms which imply the verbs to *sword*, and to *shield*.*

Composition in etymology means the forming of one word out of two or more, with or without change of form in either. In words framed by composition, each of the constituents may possess and still retain an independent significance, as for example in *steam-ship*, in which instance each half of the word has just the same sense as when employed by itself, though, in order to complete the meaning of the compound, something must be mentally supplied, *understood*, as English grammarians say, or as the Latins more happily express it, *subauditum*, *underheard*. In this case, the defect of meaning is in the want of connection between the two halves of the word, *steam* and *ship*, and a foreigner, unacquainted with the rules of English composition, an

* In many cases of this sort the modern verb has been formed from an Anglo-Saxon word of the same etymology and grammatical class, by dropping the characteristic verbal ending *-an*; in others, it is altogether of recent origin, and so long as it has existed as a verb, it has been identical in form with its primitive noun.

Our American *to progress* is one of the few verbalized nouns of recent coinage. It has not much to recommend it besides its novelty, but it seems likely to secure full recognition on both sides of the Atlantic. See further, Lecture xiv.

Italian for instance, would not be able to perceive how the English meaning could be given to the compound by the mere juxtaposition of its elements, any more than by saying *vapore-legno*, which would express nothing.* So long as this word was a new one, every English hearer supplied the notion of the elastic force of steam acting as the motive power of the ship, though now, both the name and the thing are so familiar, that *steamship* does not always suggest its own etymology. This mode of composition is more appropriately called *agglutination*, and in the language of some rude peoples it is carried so far, that all the members of a period may be incorporated into one word, which alone expresses an entire proposition. There are, however, as I shall show in treating the subject of inflections, many highly refined and cultivated languages, where nearly the same thing is effected by a mere change in the form of an uncompounded word.† In the majority of compound words in the European languages, the component parts are not all separately significant, but the word consists of a principal radical, the sense of which is reversed, extended, limited, specificated, or otherwise qualified, by combining with it a particle, or other determinative, not of itself expressive of a state, quality, or act. Of this class of compounds, we have few purely English examples, the Saxon inseparable particles, and the prepositions and adverbs used as qualificatives in composition, having become chiefly obsolete or limited in their employment, and the place of the native words into which they entered having been supplied by French or Latin compounds ready-made to our hands.‡

* The French use proper and sometimes common nouns as a sort of adjective or qualificative, or, it may be said, in forming compounds, as : *papier-Prumeau, gants-Jonvin*.

The Italians do the same, the qualificative following the noun qualified, and they are now carrying the process further. Thus I saw recently in a shop window at Milan, a card : *guanti paglia donna—ladies' straw-colored gloves*.

† In speaking of polysyllabic inflectional forms as uncompounded, I do not mean to express dissent from the theory that weak inflections generally result from the coalescence of particles or pronouns with verbal roots. As, however, the source and history of such formations is in most cases unknown, the inflections of cultivated languages must, in practice, be regarded as having lost the character of compounds, and this is especially true where old and established inflectional endings are applied to words of recent origin or introduction. See Lecture xv.

‡ We have still some Saxon qualificatives left, and it is much to be desired

There are languages whose vocabulary is chiefly made up of primitive words, and of words which by simple and obvious rules are derived from, or composed of, primitives. These primitives or radicals are usually monosyllables indigenous to the language, and still existing in it as independent words. There are other tongues whose stock of words is of a composite character, and in a considerable degree borrowed from foreign languages, or derived from native roots now obsolete or so changed in form, in the processes of derivation and composition, that they are no longer readily recognized as the source of the word. Languages of the former class freely allow the formation of new words both by derivation and by composition; those of the latter reluctantly admit a resort to either of these methods of enriching the vocabulary, and prefer rather to enlarge their stock by borrowing from foreign tongues, than to develop and modify, by organic processes, the significance of their own primitives. Of course, here and elsewhere, I use *primitive* in a very restricted sense, and by no means as implying that the roots to which we refer European words are necessarily or even probably *aboriginal*, but simply that they have no known and demonstrable historical descent from distant or apparently remotely related tongues, and therefore stand in the place of primitives to the vocabulary which is composed, or has grown out of them.

To the former of the two classes I have mentioned, that, namely, where most of the words are either primitive or derived by obvious processes from roots familiar to every native, belong the Greek, the German, the Icelandic, and the Anglo-Saxon; to the latter, that is, where the radicals of the words are often obsolete or their derivation obscure, belong the Latin, and in a still higher degree, what are called the Romance languages, or those

that the use of them may be extended. Thus, we precede radical verbs, substantives, and adjectives, by the negative or privative syllable, *un-*, as in the words *to undo*, *unbeliever*, *unknown*; the inseparable particle *mis-*, as in *misapprehend*, *mis-place*, *mis-apply*, *mis-call*; the adverbs of place, *out*, *up*, and *down*; as in *out-side*, *up-hold*, *down-fall*; the prefix *be-* as in *be-dew*, *be-strew*. In these last instances, the particle *be-* retains its original force, and it was formerly much more extensively used, such words as *be-bled*, for covered with blood, *be-powdered* for sprinkled with powder, being very common, but in most modern words with this prefix, it has ceased to modify the meaning of the radical appreciably. In Chapman's *Iliad*, Book xiv. l. 18, *forefeet* occurs.

derived from Latin.* English occupies a place between the two, but perhaps less resembles the former than the latter, particularly as it shares with these much of their incapacity of forming at will new words from familiar roots. The power of derivation and composition was eminently characteristic of our maternal Anglo-Saxon, but was much diminished upon the introduction of Norman French, or to speak more justly, the Latin element, which refused to accommodate itself to this organic faculty of the Saxon tongue. A comparison of the Anglo-Saxon translation of the Gospels with the received version, is instructive on this point. The latter is distinguished for its freedom from Latinisms, and was made with constant reference to the Greek, and with an evident design sedulously to avoid unnecessary coincidences of expression with the Vulgate and the older translations made from it. The Anglo-Saxon version was taken from the Itala or the Vulgate, and probably, though this is not certain, without any opportunity of comparison with translations in other languages, and yet its vocabulary is almost purely of native growth. Even the special words characteristic of the civil and political life of Judea, and of the Jewish and Christian religions, are very generally supplied by indigenous words, simple or compound, of corresponding etymology. The standard English version adopts, without translation, the words *prophet*, *scribe*, *sepulchre*, *centurion*, *baptize*, *synagogue*, *resurrection*, *disciple*, *parable*, *treasure*, *pharisee*, whereas the Anglo-Saxon employs, instead, native words, often no doubt framed for this special purpose. Thus, for *prophet* we have *witega*, a wise or knowing man; for *scribe*, *bocere*, book-man; for *sepulchre*, *byrgen*, whence our words *bury*, and *barrow* in the sense of funeral-mound; for *centurion*, *hundredman*, the etymological equivalent of the Latin *centurio*; for *baptize*, *fullian*; for *synagogue*, *gesamnung*, congregation; for *resurrection*, *ærist*, uprising; for *disciple*, *leorningcniht*, learning-youth; for *parable*, *bigspel*, the German *Beispiel*, example; for *treasure*, *gold-hord*; for *pharisee*, *sunder-halga*, over-holy. The word employed as the equivalent of *repentance*, or the Latin *pœnitentia*, is remarkable,

* Classical Latin bears the same relation to the Romance languages and dialects, as does Sanscrit to the Aryan—not the *source* but the *purest representation* of the class.

because it does not involve the notion of *penance*, a ceremonial or disciplinary satisfaction, which is a characteristic of the Romish theology and which seems implied even in the Lutheran *Bussethun*. The Anglo-Saxon *dædbote don dædbote*, which are used for repent and repentance, convey the idea of making satisfaction or compensation, not to the church, but to the party wronged; and therefore, if not proper translations of the corresponding words in the Greek text, they are departures from the Vulgate. I cannot but regard these facts as an argument of some weight in support of the theory which maintains that the primitive English church was substantially independent of the papal see.

Our present power of derivation and composition is much restricted, and while many other living languages can change all nouns, substantive and adjective, into each other or into verbs, and vice versa, still retaining the root-form which makes the new-coined word at once understood by every native ear, we, on the contrary, are constantly obliged to resort to compounds of foreign and to us unmeaning roots, whenever we wish to express a complex idea by a single word. The German and other cognate languages still retain this command over their own hereditary resources, and in point of ready intelligibility and picturesqueness of expression, they have thus an important advantage over languages which, like the Latin and its derivatives, possess less plastic power. There are, in all the Gothic tongues, numerous compounds, of very obvious etymology, which are most eminently expressive, considered as a part of what may be called the nature-speech of man, as contrasted with that which is more appropriately the dialect of literature and art; and thus those languages are very rich, just where, as I remarked in a former lecture, our own is growing poor. The vocabulary belonging to the affections, the terms descriptive of the spontaneous action of the intellectual and moral faculties, the pictorial words which bring the material creation vividly before us, these in the languages in question are all more numerous, more forcible than the Latin terms by which we have too often supplied their places.

The facility of derivation and composition in the Greek and Gothic languages is almost unlimited, and a native, once master of the radicals and fully possessed of the laws of forma-

tion, can at any time extemporize a word for the precise expression of any complete idea he may choose to embody in a single vocable. Aristophanes has a word of fourteen syllables, from six radicals, signifying *meanly-rising-early-and-hurrying-to-the-tribunal-to-denounce-another-for-an-infraction-of-a-law-concerning-the-exportation-of-figs*, so that one word expresses an idea, the translation of which into English occupies twenty-two. In another case, the same dramatist coins a word of seventy-two syllables, as the name of a dish composed of a great number of ingredients, and Richter quotes Forster as authority for a Sanscrit compound of one hundred and fifty-two syllables. Voss has framed a German equivalent for the first mentioned of these *sesquipedalia verba*, * eighteen-inch words, as Horace calls them, and the German word, like the Greek, is, in this and other similar cases, an example of agglutination rather than technical etymological composition. In the Gothic languages, the elements of the compound are not generally very numerous, but Icelandic, Anglo-Saxon, and German have many very forcible inseparable particles and modes of composition, by which wonderful life and vigor are imparted to language. Thus in Icelandic, the particle of, *too much*, is instinct with meaning, and when a man of lower rank reproved his foster-son, a Norwegian king, for indiscreetly conferring too high rank on a subject, he administered a more pointed rebuke by the single compound, *of-jarl, fóstri minn! too much a jarl, my foster-son!* than if he had said, as one would express the same thought in English, *You are too liberal in bestowing rank! You promote Sveinn above his merits!* † In the same admirable language, a word of three syllables precisely equivalent in its elements, and almost in form, to our words *father* and *better*, means a son who has surpassed the merits of his father. The Anglo-Saxon inseparable particles *wan-*, *be-*, and *for-* corresponding to the German *ver-*, had great force and beauty, and the writer who shall restore them to their primitive use and significance will confer a greater benefit upon our poetical dialect than he who shall naturalize a thousand Romance radicals. ‡ We have

* Morgendämmerungshändelmacherrechtsverderbmüthwanderung.

† Formanna Sögur, VI., 52.

‡ It is very difficult to define the meaning of inseparable particles, because

a few compounds with the prefix *for-* remaining. For example, *forbid* is compounded of *bid* and *for-* used in the sense of opposition or contrast, so that *bid*, which means to command, when compounded with *for-*, signifies to prohibit; but most of the words into which this particle entered are unfortunately obsolete. How much better a word is *forbled*, than faint from bleeding; *fordo*, than ruin; *fordwined*, than dwindled away; *forfoughten*, than tired with fighting; *forjudge*, than unjustly condemn; *forpined*, than wasted away; *forwatched*, than weary with watching; *forwandred*, than tired with wandering, or in another sense, than having lost the way; *forchased*, than weary of pursuit; *forwept*, than exhausted with weeping; *forworn*, than tired or worn out; and so, what a losing bargain we made when we exchanged those beautiful words, *wanhope*, for despair, and *wantrust*, for jealousy or suspicion!

However stable in its structure English must now be considered,

their force is usually more or less modified by that of the radical with which they are combined, and therefore their significance is best learned by the study of examples. *Be-* is sometimes an intensive of the sense of the verb to which it is prefixed, but it more usually and properly serves to express a peculiar relation between the radical notion conveyed by the verb and the nominative or objective of the verb, by which, while the nominative and objective retain their syntactical character of subject and object, they are logically placed in a different category. Thus, if I *sprinkle* water, the object on which the drops fall is *besprinkled*; I *bestrew* the ground with roses by *streuing* the flowers upon it; dry earth is *powdered* to dust, and the garments of a traveller are *be-powdered* with the dust. In very many Anglo-Saxon, as well as modern English verbs, the prefix *be-* has no discoverable force, and in several instances we use *be-* where the primitive word was compounded with the particle *ge*. Our *believe*, for example, is the Anglo-Saxon *ge-lyfan*, (the German *glauben*.) I do not know that the history of this change has been traced, but it took place very early, for *gereden*, a participial form, is the only word in Layamon with the prefix *ge-*, and it occurs in the Ormulum only in *gehatenn*, also a participle. The prefix *t-*, (the Saxon participial and preterite augment *ge-*, possibly distinct from the prefix *ge-* used with other forms,) is met with in the Ormulum in one instance only, but in many cases in Layamon. The compound form *believe* does not occur in the Ormulum at all, *lefenn* and *trowenn*, the modern *trou*, being employed instead: but it is often used in Layamon in different verbal and nominal forms, as *bileaf*, *bilef*, verbs, and *bilefue*, *bileue*, noun. *For-* (not to be confounded with *fore-*, as in *foretell*) seems to have corresponded nearly to the German *ver-* in all its various uses, and as in the case of *be*, its peculiar force is too subtle and variable to be fixed by definition.

yet the warfare between its elements is not absolutely ended, and though peace has been proclaimed, some skirmishing is still going on. We yet forge out questionable derivatives and solder together unlawful compounds, in colloquial and especially jocular discourse, and bold authors like Carlyle will now and then venture to print a heterodox formation. Good writers were less scrupulous two hundred years ago, but since Queen Anne's time we are become too precise, and as the French say *precious*, to tolerate the words in which our progenitors delighted. Fuller concerned himself little about starched verbal criticism, helped himself to a good word wherever he could find it, and, when need was, manufactured one for the purpose. Thus, in telling the story of the elderly gentleman with two female friends, one of whom, near his own age, plucked out his black hairs, the other, more juvenile, his white ones, he says the younger *ungray-haired* him.* This however is not worse than our now common triplicate compounds, horse-rail-road, steam-tow-boat, and the like.†

The Icelandic and the Anglo-Saxon, though not inferior to the German in facility of composition, had nevertheless a smaller

* The privative *un-* was formerly much more freely used than at present.

In the Wycliffite versions, Prol. to Romans, 299, we find: "The Jewis * * * bi breking of the lawe have *enworeshipid* God"; and Rom. i. 18, "I nyle you for to *enknowe*."

Heywood has *unput*, and Fuller in his sermon, Comfort in Calamity, says, "God permitteth the foundations to be destroyed, because he knows he can *un-destroy* them, I mean rebuild them." Sylvester, the translator of the "Divine" Du Bartas, the delight of Shakespeare's contemporaries, uses to *un-olde* for to *rejuvenate*;

Minde-gladding fruit that can un-olde a man.

Du Bartas, edition of 1611, p. 608.

Unpreached occurs in Kelling's Reports, and Lord Clarendon somewhere has "*untaken* notice of."

† Clumsy as are some of these compounds, the French are sometimes driven to employ combinations even more unwieldy. *Chinese-sugar-cane* may be endured, but *canne-à-sucre-de-la-Chine* can only be paralleled by our mongrel *pocket-hand-ker-chief*. In fact Du Bartas's French goes nearly, if not quite, as far in uncouth combination as does Sylvester's English.

Sylvester is also remarkable for the boldness of his agglutinations. In his series of sonnets, "The Miracle of Peace," we find "the In-one-Christ-baptized," "the selfe-weale-wounding Lance," "th' yerst-most-prince-loyal people," and others not less extraordinary.

number of distinctive and derivative forms, and they were thus driven to use composition in some cases, where the Teuton expressed a similar notion by a difference of ending. Of these combinations, there is one common to the Scandinavian and the English, which, in awkwardness, surpasses almost any thing to be met with in any other speech. I refer to that by which the distinction of sex is expressed, not by a termination or an independent adjective, but by using the personal pronoun as a prefix, as for example in the words *he-bear* and *she-bear*, *he-goat* and *she-goat*. *

The effort which German scholars have long been making to substitute native for foreign derivatives and compounds, has occasioned the fabrication of many extremely clumsy words, and the newly awakened zeal for the study of Anglo-Saxon and Old-English will probably lead to somewhat similar results in our tongue. The principles of composition may then be considered to have a prospective, if not an immediate, practical bearing on English etymology, and I will illustrate some of them by examples drawn from the German, which exhibit their actual application in more tangible and intelligible shapes than the present scientific dialect of English offers. The ancients had little occasion for scientific nomenclature, and they had no source from which to borrow the few terms required, except their own radicals. Aristotle could not do otherwise. The Germans do from mistaken choice what he did from necessity. Take, for instance, the idea of fluidity. The Anglo-Saxon and the Old-German had no substantive to express this notion, the condition of being fluid, but they used the specific words *water*, *oil*, and the like, instead

* In Greek and Latin lexicons and grammars, the article δ , η , $\tau\acute{o}$, and the demonstrative, *hic*, *hæc*, *hoc*, are sometimes employed to indicate the gender of nouns, as occupying less space than the usual abbreviations, *masc.*, *fem.*, and *neut.* Gil, Logon. Ang. p. 8, writing in Latin, uses *hic* according to the English idiom: "Bucke, hic dama."

Not less awkward than these compounds is the employment of the personal pronoun as a noun for *male* and *female*, as in Dampier, 1798, I., 106: "both *He's* and *She's* [the turtles] come ashore in the day-time and lie in the sun." Grimm's Dictionary under *Er*, 11, gives very similar examples of the employment of *er* and *sie* in German, and this is hardly worse than the common German use of the neuter diminutives, *Männchen* and *Weibchen*, *manling* and *wifeling*, to designate, respectively, the male and the female of animals.

of framing a generic term to express them all. Science has taught that, besides the gross, heavy, visible, incompressible fluids, water and oil, there are other more ethereal substances, possessing the quality of fluidity, that is of flowing and spreading indefinitely when only partially confined, and which are, besides, light and highly compressible, elastic, and, usually, invisible and apparently inadhesive. Of such fluids, common air, and the more recently detected gases, are familiar examples. Before the essential character of the gases was understood, English had borrowed the word *fluidity* from the Latin, to denote the most obvious and striking characteristic of water, oil, and other like bodies, and the Germans had formed from the native verb *fliessen*, to flow, a corresponding substantive, *Flussigkeit*, which is applied both to the property of fluidity and to bodies which possess it. The knowledge of the character of gaseous fluids rendered it desirable to contrive some means of grouping under separate denominations the two classes, namely, the incompressible, unelastic, visible, and the compressible, elastic, and invisible fluids. In English, we have not yet distinguished them, except by adding the epithets elastic, gaseous, compressible, or inelastic, incompressible; but in Germany compound adjectives have been framed, which, clothed in an English form, would answer to *elastic-fluid* substances and *droppable-fluid* substances, or, those which left free expand themselves like air, and those which can be dropped or poured out, like water. In English we confine the appellation *liquid* to these latter, but we apply *fluid* indiscriminately to both. Thus we call oil and water *liquids*, but we cannot speak of air and the simple gases as *liquids*, though in poetry the phrase *liquid ether* and the like are used; but on the other hand, we apply the substantive and adjective *fluid* to *air*, *water*, and *oil* alike. Doubtless the period is not far distant when the elastic and the inelastic fluids will be distinguished by appropriate designations in English, though it may be hoped less cumbrous ones than the German, and we shall also probably have specific generalizations for the watery and the oleaginous fluids.

However desirable it may be to recover the ancient plasticity of the Anglo-Saxon speech, and to restore to circulation many of its obsolete most expressive words, yet the prevalence, among English scholars, of a purism as exclusive as that of Germany,

would be a serious injury to the language, as indeed I think it is in German itself, though of course a far less evil in a harmonious and unmixed speech like the German, than in one fundamentally composite, and to use a legal term, *repugnant*, like ours. German is singularly homogeneous and consistent in its vocabulary and its structure, and the desire to strengthen and maintain its oneness of character is extremely natural with those to whom it is vernacular. The essential unity of its speech gives its study immense value as both a philological and an intellectual discipline, and it has powerfully contributed to the eminently national and original character of a literature, which, for a century, has done more to widen the sphere of human knowledge, and elevate the habitual range of human thought, than the learning and the intellect of all the world besides. I think, nevertheless, that it has purchased its present linguistic purity at some cost of clearness and precision of expression, perhaps even at some loss of distinctness of thought.

Although it must be admitted, that facility of word-coinage is in many respects a great linguistic convenience, it is quite another question whether, in philosophical exactness of meaning, any thing is gained by using words derived from or compounded of roots so familiar that they continually force upon us their often trivial etymology, and thus withdraw our attention from the figurative or abstract meaning which we seek to impose upon them.

We express most moral affections, most intellectual functions and attributes, most critical categories and most scientific notions, by words derived from Greek and Latin primitives. Such words do not carry their own definition with them, and to the mere English student they are purely arbitrary in their signification.* The scientific writer who introduces or employs them, may so define his terms as to attach to them the precise idea he wishes to convey, and the reader or hearer receives the word unaccompanied by any incongruous image suggested by its root-form. Where, on the contrary, words applied to so noble uses are derived from common and often vulgar roots, from the vocabulary of the market, the kitchen, or the stable, the thoughts of the reader must be frequently disturbed by gross or undignified images, called forth by an etymology drawn from the names of familiar

* See Lecture IV.

and humble objects and processes. Take, for instance, the geographical meaning of the Latin-English words, longitude and latitude. The ancients supposed the torrid and the frigid zones to be uninhabitable and even impenetrable by man, but while the earth, as known to them, was bounded westwardly by the Atlantic Ocean, it extended indefinitely towards the east. The dimensions of the habitable world, then, (and ancient geography embraced only the home of man, ἡ οἰκουμένη,) were much greater, measured from west to east, than from south to north. Accordingly, early geographers called the greater dimension, or the east and west line, the *length*, *longitudo*, of the earth; the shorter dimension, or the north and south line, they denominated its *breadth*, *latitudo*. These Latin terms are retained in the modern geography of most European nations, but with a modified meaning. The north or south distance of any point on the earth's surface from the equator is the north or south latitude of that point. The east or west distance between two lines drawn perpendicularly to the equator, through two points on the earth's surface, is the east or west longitude of those points from each other. Latitude and longitude etymologically indeed mean *breadth* and *length*, yet in their use in English, their form does not suggest to the student their primary radical signification, and he attaches to them no meaning whatever but their true scientific import. The employment of the English terms *breadth* and *length*, to denote respectively north and south and east and west distance on the surface of a sphere, would, in the present advanced state of our knowledge, be a perversion of the true meaning of words. Yet this is exactly what German purism does when it rejects the precise, philosophic *longitude* and *latitude*, substitutes for them the vague and inaccurate terms *Länge* and *Breite*, length and breadth, and says, accordingly, that St. Petersburg lies in sixty degrees of north *breadth*, and twenty-eight of east *length* from Paris. Still more palpable is this abuse of speech when a different form of expression is employed, and we are told that the *breadth* of the city of New York is 41°, its *length* 74° W.*

* I do not know whether the Germans or the Dutch were the first to *translate* longitude and latitude by native words of their respective tongues. The earliest examples I have noted of the use of modern equivalents of these words

The constant obtrusion of trivial, and often misleading, etymologies in the scientific dialect of Germany, produces in the mind a confusion between words logically or etymologically related, which obscures the meaning of scientific passages. This probably explains how Rudorff came to say in his *Schriften der Römischen Feldmesser*: Während wir [moderns] die Entfernung vom Æquator nach Norden oder Süden, *Länge*, die Entfernung vom Meridian nach Osten oder Westen, *Breite*, zu nennen gewohnt sind.

In like manner, the English adjective *great* and the German *gross* are both, in their proper signification, applicable only to objects which, as tested by the ordinary standards of comparison, are large, and their nouns, *greatness* in the one language, *Grösse* in the other, are strictly conjugate in meaning. In the philosophic dialect of English and the Romance languages, we employ *magnitude* as the scientific equivalent of *size*, *dimensions*. *Magnitude* is derived from the Latin *magnus*, great, but that etymology is not so familiar to English ears as to attach to the word *magnitude* the idea of relatively large bulk, and we apply the term, without a sense of incongruity, to the dimensions of any object however small. The Germans use *Grösse* as the scientific equivalent of *magnitude*, and in this they pervert language in the same way we should do, in speaking of the *greatness* of microscopic animalculæ so small that a hundred of them could lie on the point of a pin.

So in chemistry and in the language of industrial art, to *calcine* signifies to reduce, by longer or shorter exposure to heat, metals and other bodies popularly considered incombustible, to a friable condition. The burning of lime is a familiar instance of calcination, and in fact *calcine* is derived from *calx*, the Latin word for lime. Burnt limestone, and the substances to which metals and many other bodies are reduced by heat, having a certain resemblance to each other in consistence and other properties, were conceived to be chemically related, and therefore the name of *calx* was applied to these substances in the dialect of the alchem-

are in Dapper, *Beschrijving van Persie*, 1672. De stad Derbend is gelegen op de lengte van vijf en tachtig graden, en op de noorder breete van een en veertigh graden, dertigh minuten.—p. 20. Grimm's Dictionary gives no examples of such use.

ists, and passed from their laboratories into the language of common life. The English verb *calcine*, to us, to whom the etymology of the word is not always present, expresses precisely the reduction of incombustible substances to the state of a calx. The modern German uses, instead of the alchemical *calciniren*, the verb *verkalken* derived from *Kalk*, *lime*, which is no doubt allied to the Latin *calx*, and probably enough derived from it. But *Kalk* has not the signification of *calx*, and the verb *verkalken*, therefore, properly means to reduce to *lime*, not to bring to the condition of a *calx*, which latter acceptation the scientific purists have arbitrarily, and in violation of the principles of their own language, imposed upon it.

We have some, but happily not many, similar examples in the received scientific dialect of English. Our substantive *acid*, for instance, is Latin, but for want of a native term, we employ it as a conjugate noun to the adjective *sour*, and it has become almost as familiar a word as *sour* itself. Chemistry adopted *acid* as the technical name of a class of bodies, of which those first recognized in science were distinguished by sourness of taste. But as chemical knowledge advanced, it was discovered that there were compounds precisely analogous in essential character, which were not sour, and consequently *acidity* was but an accidental quality of some of these bodies, not a necessary or universal characteristic of all. It was thought too late to change the name, and accordingly in all the European languages the term *acid*, or its etymological equivalent, is now applied to rock-crystal, quartz, and flint. In like manner, from a similar misapplication of *salt*, in scientific use, chemists class the substance of which junk-bottles, French mirrors, windows and opera-glasses are made, among the *salts*, while, on the other hand, analysts have declared that the essential character, not only of other so-called salts, but of common kitchen-salt, the salt of salts, had been mistaken, that salt is not a *salt*, and accordingly have excluded that substance from the class of bodies upon which, as their truest representative, it had bestowed its name.* When a plant or animal is named specifically

* Es ist heutzutage nicht mehr möglich eine Definition einer "Säure" oder eines "Salzes" zu geben, welche alle Körper, die man als Säuren oder Salze bezeichnet, in sich einschliesst. Wir haben Säuren welche geschmacklos sind, welche die Pflanzenfarben nicht röthen, welche die Alkalien nicht neutralisiren ;

maximus, it often turns out there is a larger. The attempt to press into the service of the exact sciences words taken from the vocabulary of common life is thus seen to be objectionable, because such words are incapable of scientific precision and singleness of meaning, and, moreover, as in the instances cited, they often express entirely false notions of physical fact.* Language, if not imitative, was at least descriptive in its earlier stages. The attempt to make the dialect of science descriptive now, is to carry language back to its infancy. Though philologists trace the Arabic, or rather Indian, numerals, in their written forms, to the initial letters of the Sanscrit words which express them, some mathematicians still maintain that they were originally strictly pictorial. We might now as well try to restore these signs to their primitive composite structure, and insist that the character for every numeral should be made up of as many strokes as it expresses units, or that twenty should be written two-ten, as to attempt to force descriptive terms upon science.

With respect to compounds of trivial roots, it must be admitted that they are advantageously employed as the names of familiar material or immaterial objects and processes, of a somewhat complex but not abstruse nature. Thus *weathered* is a good word because truly expressive, though it does not convey a strictly scientific idea. *Steam-boat* is a better word than the Greco-French *pyrosca phe*, *horse-shoe* arch better than *Saracenic* arch, the German *Vorgefühl* than *presentiment*. So English physicians would have done more wisely in adopting the plain descriptive compounds, *day-blindness* and *night-blindness*, which, as appellations of certain affections of the sight, explain themselves, than to borrow the Greek *nyctalopia*,† which

es gibt Säuren, in denen Sauerstoff ein Bestandtheil ist und in denen der Wasserstoff fehlt, in anderen ist Wasserstoff, kein Sauerstoff. Der Begriff von Salz ist zuletzt so verkehrt geworden, dass man dahinkam das Kochsalz, das Salz aller Salze, von dem die ändern den Namen haben, aus der Reihe der eigentlichen Salze auszuschliessen. Liebig, Chemische Briefe, Vierte Auflage, I., 96.

* *Decomound* may be cited as an instance of a word which, in its scientific use, conveys an entirely false idea. *Decomound* is defined by Webster as, to *compound substances already compounded, to compound a second time*, whereas etymologically it should be the equivalent of *decompose*.

† *Νυκταλωπία* est passio qua per diem visus patentibus oculis denegatur, et nocturnis irruentibus tenebris redditur, aut versâ vice (ut plerique volunt) die redditur, nocte negatur. ISIDORUS, *Orig.*, IV. c. viii.

has been applied by some writers to one of these maladies, by others to its converse, and which, as we learn from Isidore, the grandson of the great King Theodoric, was just as equivocal twelve hundred and fifty years ago as it is to-day.

But in the use of these words in the dialect of science, in their application to abstract or obscure philosophical conceptions, the inappropriateness of a nomenclature derived from familiar roots is often very obvious. Our English word *anatomy*, which, referred to its Greek original, means simply *cutting up*, has come to have the signification of carefully dissecting, separating, or laying open by the knife, the framework, tissues, and vessels of animal bodies with a view of studying the structure and functions of their organs; and all this is fairly implied and felt by every speaker or hearer whenever the word is uttered, nor does it suggest to the mind any other possible signification, or call up any alien image. Many German writers have chosen to repudiate this so expressive, definite, and strictly philosophic word, and to substitute for it the compound *Zergliederungskunst*, which, dressed in an English form, would be equivalent to the *Art-of-dismembering*, or more exactly, the *Unlimbing art*. Now this unwieldy compound rather expresses the act of dissecting, the mechanical part of anatomy and some therefore have thought it necessary to employ another word, *Zergliederungswissenschaft*, the knowledge or science of unlimbing, to indicate the scientific purpose and character of anatomy, which is so happily implied in what to us is a purely arbitrary word.

Whenever a derivative or compound term may, without violence, have several meanings, it is a matter of considerable difficulty for those to whom all these meanings are, so to speak, instinctively familiar, to confine their intellectual conceptions strictly to one, but, to the English student, *anatomy* is practically not a compound. He does not refer it to its etymological source, and to him it can mean nothing but scientific dissection; nor can the word suggest any image not appropriately belonging to that idea.

In the nomenclature of Chemistry, to designate the bodies which, because analysis is not yet carried beyond them, are provisionally denominated simple substances, we employ Greek compounds, giving to them, by formal definition, and therefore arbitrarily, a precise, distinct, rigorously scientific meaning, exclud-

ing all other direct or collateral, proper or figurative significations.* In the German chemical nomenclature, these bodies are designated by Teutonic compounds derived from roots as trivial as any in the language. The words *carbon*, *hydrogen*, *oxygen*, *nitrogen*, employed in English, do not recall their etymology, and their meaning is gathered only from technical definition. They express the entire scientific notion of the objects they stand for, and are abridged definitions, or rather signs of definition, of those objects. They are to the English student as purely intellectual symbols as the signs of addition, subtraction, and equality in Algebra, or, to use a more appropriate simile, as their initials C for carbon, H for hydrogen, O for oxygen, and the like, which in conjunction with numerals are used in expressing quantitative proportions in primary combinations. The corresponding German compounds, Kohl-Stoff, Wasser-Stoff, Sauer-Stoff, and Stick-Stoff, *coal-stuff*, *water-stuff*, *sour-stuff*, and *choke-stuff*, express, each, only a single one of the characteristics of the body to which they are applied, to say nothing of the unphilosophical tendency of thus grossly materializing and vulgarizing our conception of agencies so subtle and so ethereal in their nature.†

* Unfortunately the English chemical nomenclature seems to be becoming gradually more cumbrous and less definite. In a recent number of *Nature*, I find such words as *orthonitrotoluol* and *paranitrotoluol*, *ozohydrobenzoin* and *metacetyloluol*. Paraffine is derived from the Latin *parum affinis*, *little like*, because paraffine is *slightly like* something else. On the other hand *isopire* is derived from the Greek *ισος* and *πιρ* because the blow-pipe affects it as it does many other minerals. In short, the new chemical nomenclature, though it may have some advantages as a help to memory, is often inherently as absurd as the jargon of the old alchemists.

† In the Danish chemical nomenclature *brint* from *at branda*, *to burn*, signifies *hydrogen*; *ilt* from *ild*, *fire*, signifies *oxygen*. *Brint* and *ilt* therefore, though not allied words, express allied ideas, both involving the notion of combustion, and they are therefore liable to be confounded in the memory of the learner.

The puristico-descriptive nomenclature seems to have reached its acme in Volger's vocabulary of Crystallography (*Krystallographie*, Stuttgart, 1854). In another of his works, this author describes a form of Boracite, a solid of sixty-two sides, as the *linkstimplig-höckertimplige*, *würfig-kugeltimplige*, *rechts-timplige Knöchling*, and another variety of the same crystal as the *linkstimplig-höckertimplig-knöchlige*, *rechtskugeltimplige*, *würfige (rechte) Tim-*

The use of the new German technical terms is subject to this further inconvenience, that the compound will not admit the adjectival form, and of course the noun is without a conjugate attributive. While, therefore, a German may say, in pure Teutonic, for *anatomy*, the Art-of-dismembering; for *astronomy*, Star-knowledge; for *geography*, Earth-knowledge and Earth-description (either of which, by the way, may as properly apply to soil or rock as to the globe), yet when he has occasion for a corresponding adjective, he must resort to the Greek compounds *anatomisch*, *astronomisch*, *geographisch*, and thus he introduces confusion into his scientific dialect, and loses whatever had been gained by the introduction of native compound nouns. So, in expressing the quantitative proportions de-

pling, the meaning of which would not be altogether obvious even to his countrymen, had he not informed us that in the Niederdeutsche Mundart, Timpel signifies Zipfel, or scharfe Ecke. Volger, Monographie des Borazites, p. 120.

Kenngott (Synonymik der Krystallographie XXXV.) gives us this example of the application of Volger's nomenclature to a still more complicated form of crystallization: "Einplättliger, querstutzlig-stutzliger, querhochdächliger, quermitteldächliger, querhochthürmliger, quermittelthürmliger, querniederthürmliger, schlankzinkliger, niederzinkliger, quaderligzweifach-querkantliger Idokras-Querling," and even this string of hard words leaves the form of the mineral but half described. In justice to our author, it ought to be observed that, long as his technical words are, they are much shorter than some of those employed by others. Thus Schübling, *shoveling*, is a trifle compared to *pentagontrikistetetraeder*, and Keiling, *wedgeling*, has the like advantage over *quadratic-spenoidin-normal-position*.

Besides these, Volger uses Schrägling, *slantling*, Thürmling, *towerling*, Dächling, *roofling*, Eckling, *cornerling*, and many more of like coinage, by all which

More is meant than meets the ear.

It is to be regretted that our author does not consistently adhere to the principles of a system which he has taken such pains to elaborate, and it is not easy to see why he should speak of Halurgen and die halurgische Geologie, when he had so good etymological material as Salz to work upon.

The philosophers of Holland have exhibited a greater degree of etymological courage than their German brethren. They have framed conjugate adjectives for their newly formed scientific compound nouns, and thus built up such words as *ontleedkundig* for *anatomical*, *de proefondervindelijke wetenschappen* for the *experimental sciences*, in which

terminated by ultimate analysis in chemistry, he uses H and O, the initials of hydrogen and oxygen, to represent those bodies, and the student of chemistry is taught that H stands for Wasserstoff, O for Sauerstoff, and so of the rest.

It is no answer to the objections I am urging to say that habit reconciles us to the scientific use of unscientific terms; that they at length, when employed in combination with other words of art, sink their etymology, so to speak, and cease to suggest disturbing images; for just in the same proportion as they do this they cease to be descriptive at all, and the only argument left for their use is that of a form more in harmony with the ordinary orthoepical combinations of the language, an argument certainly not to be weighed against the obvious disadvantages of a vocabulary, which is not only trivial, but which scientific discovery is constantly showing to have been founded on false analogies, and erroneous theory.*

There is, it must be admitted, a convenience in the double forms of some part of the German neologistic nomenclature, as for example in the distinction between *Erdkunde*, the knowledge of the earth, and *Erdbeschreibung*, the description of the earth. These ideas are indeed logically distinguishable,

last heptasyllable, indeed, the radical word *proef* is probably not indigenous, but borrowed from the Latin through the French.

Staning, *Voormals en Thans*, 44, has "scheikundige of werktuigkundige," *chemical or mechanical*; and on p. 78, "volkshuishoudkundig, beschowd," considered *from-the-point-of-national-economy*; *volkshuishoudkundig* being used adverbially. The former two of these compounds are absurd and unmeaning, because, as used in the passage where they occur, they refer to chemical or mechanical *action*, and therefore the element *kunde* is worse than superfluous.

So on p. 82, he uses *evennachtslyñ* for *equator*, and on p. 87, *gekorvene* for *insects*. In the Dutch mathematical vocabulary we have *teerlingwoortel* for *cube-root*. But terms so formed are by no means confined to Dutch writers on physical and mathematical science, for the grammarians use *zelfklinker* and *medeklinker* for *vowel* and *consonant*, and *gezichteinder*, *sight-ender*, is employed for *horizon* by Van Lennep and other *belles-lettres* authors.

* Boltz, *Fremdwort*, p. 83, proposes to call *cigar*, *Glimmerstengel*; *electricity*, *Blitzstoff*; *nature*, *Zeugemutter*; *gallop* (of a horse) *Schnellhüpgelauf*; *person*, *Vernunftwesen*. *Strahler* has been suggested for *Krystall*, not because it *shines*, but because it was popularly believed to be produced by *lightning*.

because, we may know that which we do not undertake to describe, and we may undertake to describe that which we know, or, as experience unhappily too often shows, that which we do not know; but it is by no means clear that there is any advantage in having a separate word for the expression of every distinguishable shade of human thought. True it is, as is observed by Coleridge, that "by familiarizing the mind to equivocal expressions, that is, such as may be taken in two or more different meanings, we introduce confusion of thought, and furnish the sophist with his best and handiest tools. For the juggle of sophistry consists, for the greater part, in using a word in one sense in the premises, and in another sense in the conclusion." But it is equally true, as the same great master elsewhere remarks, that "It is a dull and obtuse mind, that must divide in order to distinguish." The ramifications and subdivisions of our vocabulary must end somewhere. The permutations and combinations of articulate sounds are not infinite, nor can the human memory retain an unlimited number of words. It is inevitable that in some cases one word must serve to express different ideas, and if they are ideas from the occasional confusion of which no danger to any great moral or intellectual principle is to be feared, we must be content to trust to the intelligence of our hearers to distinguish for themselves. There is much intellectual discipline in the mere use of language. The easiest disciplines are not necessarily the best, and therefore a vocabulary so complete as never to exercise the sagacity of a reader, by obliging him to choose between two meanings either of which is possible, would afford very little training to faculties, of whose culture speech is of itself the most powerful instrument.*

* Few will deny that the French chemical nomenclature of Lavoisier's time, which spread so rapidly over Europe, was a highly beneficial improvement in the vocabulary of the branch of knowledge to which it was applied, but it operated in some respects both injuriously to that science and unjustly to the fame of the philosophers whose discoveries had made chemistry what it was. It produced a complete severance between the old and the new, a hiatus in the history, and an apparent revolution in the character, of the science, which has led recent times to suppose that futile alchemy ended, and philosophical chemistry began, with the adoption of the new nomenclature. The reader will find some interesting observations on this point in Liebig's *Chemische Briefe*, 4te Auflage, Brief III.

LECTURE X.

THE VOCABULARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

III.

THE aphorism, popularly, but perhaps erroneously, ascribed to Buffon, "The style is the man," is a limited application of the general theory, that there is such a relation between the mind of man and the speech he uses, that a perfect knowledge of either would enable an acute psychological philologist to deduce and construct the other from it. The distinctive characteristics of nations or races employing different tongues, so far as we are able to account for them, are due to causes external to the individual though common in their operation to the whole people, such as climate, natural productions, modes of life dependent on soil and climate, or, in short, to physical conditions.

We might then admit this theory, without qualification, if it were once established that the language of a people is altogether a natural product of their physical constitution and circumstances, and that its character depends upon laws as material as those which determine the hue and growth of the hair, the color of the eyes and skin, the musical quality of the human voice, or the inarticulate cries of the lower animals. But those who believe that there is in man a life above organization, a spirit above nature, will be slow to allow that his only instrument for the outward manifestation of his mightiest intellectual energies and loftiest moral aspirations, as well as his sole means of systematic culture for the intellect and heart, can be the product of a mode of physical being, which, though in some points superior in degree, is yet identical in kind, with that shared also by the lowest of the brutes that acknowledge him as their lord and master. Nor is the theory in question at all consistent with observed facts; for while nations, not distinguished by any marked differences of

physical structure or external condition, use languages characterized by wide diversities of vocabulary and syntax, individuals in the same nation, the same household even, display striking dissimilarities of person, of intellect, and of temper, and yet, in spite of perceptible variations in articulation, and in the choice and collocation of words, speak in the main not only one language, but one dialect. History presents numerous instances of a complete revolution in national character, without any radical change in the language of the people, and, contrariwise, of persistence of character with a great change in tongue. The forms of speech which the slavish, and therefore deservedly enslaved, Roman of the first century of our era employed in addressing Tiberius, were as simple and direct as would have been those of a soldier in conversing with his centurion in the heroic age of Regulus. The Icelander of the twelfth century carried the law of blood for blood as far as the Corsican or the Kabyle of the nineteenth, and when his honor was piqued, or his passions roused, he was as sanguinary in his temper as the Spaniard, the Anizeh-Arab, or the Ashantee. His descendants, speaking very nearly the same dialect, are so much softened in character, that violence is almost unknown among them, and when, a few years since, a native was condemned to death, not one of his countrymen could be induced to act as the minister of avenging justice. On the other hand, it would be difficult to make out any difference of character, habits, or even ethical system, between the Bedouin of the present day and his ancestors in the time of Abraham and of Job, and yet his language has unquestionably undergone many great changes.*

The relations between man and his speech are not capable of precise formulation, and we cannot perhaps make any nearer approach to exact truth than to say, that while every people has its general analogies, every individual has his peculiar idiosyncrasies,

* As an illustration of such persistence in the East, may be mentioned an anecdote related by an English gentleman who held for a time a high official position in India. Complaints were brought to him of the brutal treatment of a Hindoo soldier by his colonel, who, among other acts of personal violence towards the poor native, had, on one occasion, knocked out his front teeth. The colonel was heavily fined and the money paid over to the injured Hindoo, who, however, seemed not a little disappointed at the decision. His judge then asked him why he was not satisfied. The soldier replied, "Because I thought you would have ordered my colonel's teeth to be knocked out."

physical, mental, and linguistic, and that mind and speech, national and individual, modify and are modified by each other, to an extent, and by the operation of laws, which we are not yet able to define and generalize, though, in particular instances, the relation of cause and effect can be confidently affirmed to exist.

But in the midst of this uncertainty, we still recognize the working of the great principle of diversity in unity which characterizes all the operations of the creative mind; and though every man has a dialect of his own, as he has his own special features of character, his distinct peculiarities of shape, gait, tone, and gesture, in short, the individualities which make him John and not Peter,* yet over and above all these, he shares in the general traits which together make up the unity of his language, the unity of his nation. "Unity of speech," says a Danish writer, "is a necessary condition of the independent development of a people, and the coexistence of two languages in a political state is one of the greatest national misfortunes. Every race has its own organic growth, which impresses its own peculiar form on the religious ideas and the philosophical opinions of the people, on their political constitution, their legislation, their customs, and the expression of all these individualities is found in their speech. In this are embalmed that to which they have aspired, that to which they have attained. There we find the record of their thought, its comprehension, wealth and depth, the life of the people, the limits of their culture, their appetencies and their antipathies, whatsoever has germinated, fructified, ripened, and passed away among them, yes, even their short-comings and their trespasses. The people and their language are so con-natural, that the one thrives, changes, perishes with the other." So far our author, and with the allowances to be made for the exaggeration into

* Bishop Horne, remarking on this principle, says: "The wisdom of this arrangement of Divine Providence in the Countenance, Voice, and Handwriting which, although the same features go to the formation of the countenance, the same muscular movements to the articulation of the voice, and the tracings of the pen, yet so infinitely diversified are they that man is at once distinguished from his fellow, by his face in the light, his voice in the dark, and his handwriting when absent."

Detective Police has lately observed that an inked impression from the ball of the thumb is never precisely similar in any two individuals, and hence such impressions are useful as tests of personal identity.

which writers are often led by their enthusiasm for their subject, his views are entitled to general concurrence. We think by words, and therefore thought and words cannot but act and react on each other. As a man speaks, so he thinks, and as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

It is evident, therefore, that unity of speech is essential to the unity of a people. Community of language is a stronger bond than identity of religion or of government, and contemporaneous nations of one speech, however formally separated by differences of creed or of political organization, are essentially one in culture, one in tendency, one in influence. The fine patriotic effusion of Arndt, "Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland," was founded upon the idea that the oneness of the Deutsche Zunge, the German speech, implied a oneness of spirit, of interest, of aims and of duties, and the universal acceptance with which the song was received was evidence that the poet had struck a chord to which every Teutonic heart responded. The national language is the key to the national intellect, the national heart, and it is the special vocation of what is technically called philology, as distinguished from linguistics, to avail itself of the study of language as a means of knowing, not man in the abstract, but man as collected into distinct communities, informed with the same spirit, exposed to the same moulding influences, and pursuing the same great objects by substantially the same means. We are certainly not authorized to conclude that all the individuals of a nation are altogether alike because they speak the same mother-tongue, but their characters, mental and physical, presumably resemble each other as nearly as the fragments of the common language which each has appropriated to his own use.* Every individual selects from the general stock his own vocabulary, his favorite combinations of words, his own forms of syntax, and thus frames for himself a dialect, the outward expression of which is an index to the inner life of the man. No two Englishmen, Germans, or Frenchmen speak and act in all points alike, yet in character as well as in speech, they would generally be found to have more points of

* Galton's curious experiments show that a representation of the general type of a particular tribe or family may be obtained by superposing upon each other faint photographic impressions of the features of several individuals thus related.

sympathy and resemblance with each other, than either of them with any man of a different tongue.

The relations between the grammatical structure or general idiom of a language and the moral and intellectual character of those who speak it, are usually much more uncertain and obscure than the connection between the particular words which compose their stock, and the thoughts, habits, and tendencies of those who employ them. Except under circumstances where our mouths are sealed and our thoughts suppressed from motives of prudence, of delicacy, or of shame, the names of the objects dearest to the heart, the expression of the passions which most absorb us, the nomenclature of the religious, social, or political creeds or parties to which we have attached ourselves, will most frequently rise to the lips. Hence it is the vocabulary and the phraseological combinations of the man, or class of men, which must serve as the clue to guide us into the secret recesses of their being; and in spite of occasional exceptions, apparent or real, it is generally true that our choice of words, as also of the special or conventional meanings of words, is determined by the character, the ruling passion, the habitual thoughts,—by the life, in short, of the man; and in this sense Ben Jonson uttered a great and important truth when he said: “Language most shows a man: speak that I may see thee!”* It springs out of the most retired and inmost parts of us, and is the image of the parent of it, the mind. No glass renders a man’s form and likeness so true as his speech.”

But there is much risk of error in the too extended application of this criterion. In two cases only can we be justified in condemning a people upon the strength of indications furnished by their language alone. The one is that of the voluntary, or at least the *free*, selection of a debased or perverted diction, when a higher and purer one is possible; the other, that of the non-existence of words expressive of great ideas, and this will generally be found coupled with an abundance of terms denoting, and yet not stigmatizing, gross and wicked acts and passions.

There are cases where the crimes of rulers are mirrored in the

* Parla perchè io ti veggia, diceva il Bernia.

FLORIO, Giardino de Rêcreations, p. 181. 1591.

speech of their subjects; * others, where governments, by a long course of corruption, oppression, and tyranny, have stamped upon the language of their people, or at least upon its temporary conventionalities, a tone of hypocrisy, falsehood, baseness, that clings to the tongue, even after the spirit of the nation is emancipated, and it is prepared to vindicate, by deeds of heroism, the rights, the principles, the dignity of its manhood.

I think the language of Italy is a case in point. Landor argues the profound and hopeless depravity of the Italians from the abject character of their complimentary and social dialect, † and the phraseology expressive of their relations with their rulers or other superiors, as well as from the pompous style by which they magnify the importance of things in themselves insignificant, and their constant use of superlatives and intensives, with reference to trifling objects and occasions. Were it true that the Lombards, the Piedmontese, the Tuscans, and the Romans of the present day had not inherited, but freely adopted, the dialect of which Landor gives a sort of anthology, it would argue much in favor of his theory. ‡ A bold and manly and generous and truthful people

* " 'Tis you that say it, not I. You do the deeds,
And your ungodly deeds find me the words."

SOPHOCLES, as translated by Milton.

† Forms of politeness, especially in foreign languages, are often too severely condemned as hypocrisy. Italian kindness, as every stranger who has lived long in Italy will testify, is something more than mere expression, it is genuine, and it may in part be the effect of those habits of courteous observance which contribute so essentially to the nourishment of that virtue. Exaggerated impressions with regard to dissimulation, as a characteristic of Italians, have sometimes arisen from the mistakes of foreigners who misinterpret expressions which could not mislead a fellow-countryman.

‡ The Imaginary Conversations of Landor are a very indifferent authority upon questions of fact, whatever opinions may be entertained concerning them as standards in criticism, in language, or in morals. But a physiognomist may refer to a caricature for an illustration of the connection between moral traits and the physical features by which they are indicated, and I may, with at least equal propriety, cite the exaggerations of Landor as exemplifying the manner in which external causes may corrupt language, and, through it, the morality of those who use it.

The metamorphosis of the frank, straightforward speech of ancient Rome into the cringing form which it has in modern times adopted, is the natural consequence of centuries of tyrannies, that have crushed not so much the bodies as the souls of men who have so long groaned hopelessly under them. But what-

certainly would not choose to say *umiliare una supplica*, to *humiliate a supplication*, for, to *present a memorial*; to style the strength which awes, and the finesse which deceives, alike, *onestà*, *honesty* or *respectability*; to speak of taking human life by poison, not as a crime, but simply as a mode facilitating death, *ajutare la morte*; to employ *pellegrino*, *foreign*, for *admirable*; to describe a modest brooch as, *una spilla in oro, tempestate di pietre preziose*; to call every house with a large door, *un palazzo*, a *palace*; a brass ear-ring, *una gioja*, a *joy*; a present of a bodkin, *un regalo*, a *royal munificence*; an alteration in a picture, *un pentimento*, a *repentance*; a man of honor, *un uomo di garbo*, a *well-dressed man*; a lamb's fry, *una cosa stupenda*, a *stupendous thing*; or a message sent by a footman to his tailor, through a scullion, *una ambasciata*, an *embassy*.

We must distinguish between cases where words expressive of great ideas, mighty truths, do not at all exist in a language, and those where, as in Italy, the pressure of external or accidental circumstances has compelled the disuse or misapplication of such, and the habitual employment of the baser part of the national

ever may have been the character of the Italians when Landor wrote the dialogue from which I have taken these examples, he would grossly misjudge their countrymen of this generation, who should infer that because the language has not yet recovered its native majesty, the people is not ripe for an ennobling revolution. The habitual speech of the Italians is, at present, by no means of so unmanly a character as the author in question represents it, and even when expressions, which jar with the self-respect of a citizen of a free state, are employed, they are not usually accompanied with a fawning or degradingly deferential manner, or an ostentatious sacrifice of the rights of private opinion and private interest. The leaven of French democracy, which however unsparing in its career of overthrow at home, was a beneficent influence in the Italian peninsula, is still at work; the last quarter of a century has brought the principles of civil and religious liberty within the intelligence, and commended them to the heart, of the masses; occasion only has long been wanting; the recent outrage perpetrated by the Papal government on the sanctities of domestic life, in the kidnapping of a Jewish child, will, it is to be hoped, hasten the dawn of the day when the whole Ausonian people shall be transformed, transfigured we may say, into what Milton describes as "a noble and puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep and shaking her invincible locks." Then they will reassert their claim to the divine rights of humanity, and then their speech, like themselves, will burst its fetters and become once more as grand and as heroic as it is beautiful.

vocabulary. Where grand words are found in a speech, there grand thoughts, noble purposes, high resolves exist also, or at the least, the spark slumbers, which a favoring breath may kindle into a cherishing or a devouring flame.*

* The Italian writers of the *secolo aureo* sometimes show a nice sense of linguistic propriety in distinguishing between words liable to be confounded. To exemplify : modern natural philosophers say that *science* implies the power of prediction, that is, the power of saying approximately how substances and bodies, whose properties are known, will behave if brought into new combinations or relations. Guido dalle Colonne of the 13th century in his *Storia della Guerra di Troja*, (a combination and amplification of Dares Phrygius and Dictys Cretensis,) seems to have anticipated this idea, for, speaking of Cassandra, p. 106, ed. 1867, he says : *riluceva nelle arti liberali, abiendo la conoscenza delle presenti e la scienza delle future cose*. In none of the Latin texts of Dares and Dictys to which I have access do I find any trace of this distinction. Perhaps when we shall better understand the nature of man and the history of the past, we shall in like manner arrive at a new 'prophetic strain' in regard to the effect of new social conditions. The habits of modern Italian life and thought are unfavorable to such precision, and perhaps their foreign admirers may find for their vagueness and want of exactitude in language the same excuse which is alleged for the *bulls* of the Irish, namely, a rapidity of intellectual action that compels them to pass, unnoticed, qualifications and distinctions with which Germans usually surround and limit their propositions. The English and Americans, and to a less extent the French also, from their more multifarious relations with material life, are forced to acquaint themselves with a great variety of special vocabularies. They consequently employ in refined conversation and in literature, a much larger number of semi-technical and descriptive terms than do the Italians. Hence Italian pastoral and idyllic poetry is much less *picturesque* than that of the more northern nations. A foreign traveller in Italy is often astonished at the difficulty he finds in learning the Italian name for a particular flower either from his guide or from his better instructed acquaintance. The answer almost invariably is 'è un flore,' or 'è una viola,' and it is next to impossible to get anything more definite unless from a professed botanist. In conversation, cultivated Italians use fewer terms borrowed from agriculture and the mechanic arts than do their northern neighbors. I was long in Italy before I could find an Italian equivalent for the English *turf* or *greensward*, the German *Rasen*, and the French *gazon*; and the Italian lexicographers, without exception so far as I have discovered, define *semolino* to be *crushed macaroni* or *pasta*, instead of *crushed* or *coarsely ground wheat*, which it really is, and of which they partake every day of their lives. It may be said that generally the Italians employ generic rather than specific terms. The foreign sculptors in Italy say that their workmen call all iron tools indiscriminately *ferrì*, *irons*, instead of naming the instrument with reference to its office. I must admit, however, that Carena and Palma have shown that the Italian artizans and farm laborers have at their command an abundant supply of technical terms of which the average non-professional Italian makes very little use.

Every individual is, in a sense, a natural product of the people to whom he belongs, and the brave and good, who have so long pined in the dungeons of Naples and of Rome, are a sufficient proof that the oppression which has lopped the flower, has failed to extirpate the root, of Italian virtue.

For the purposes of intellectual, moral, and especially religious culture, a speech must possess appropriate words for the expression of all mental, ethical, and spiritual states and processes, and where such a nomenclature is totally wanting, there is no depth of depravity which we are not authorized to infer from so deplorable a deficiency of the means of apprehension, reflection, and instruction, concerning the cardinal interests, and highest powers and perceptions of humanity. It is in the non-existence of words of this class, that missionaries, and other teachers of Christianity and civilization, have found the most formidable obstacles to the propagation of intellectual and religious light and truth among the heathen. Even the Greek, with all its wealth of words, had, as Wesley long ago observed, no term for the Christian virtue of *humility*, until an Apostle framed one for it, and for this the moral poverty of the classic speech compelled him to resort to a root conveying the idea, not of self-abasement in the consciousness of utter unworthiness in the sight of a pure and holy God, but of positive debasement, meanness, and miserableness of spirit.

Let us suppose a people cursed with a speech which had no terms corresponding to the ideas of holiness, faith, veneration, conscience, truth, justice, dignity, love, mercy, benevolence, or their contraries. Could its moral teachers frame an ethical system founded on qualities whose very existence their language, and of course the conscious self-knowledge of the people, did not recognize? Could they enforce the duty of truthfulness in word and deed; of a reverential deference to what is great and worthy in man; of love and adoration for the immeasurably higher and better attributes of the Deity; of charity, of philanthropy, of patience, and of resignation, in a tongue which possessed no terms to denote the moral and the religious virtues? But even these alone would not render a language an adequate medium for the communication of all moral doctrine. Men must learn to fear, hate, and abhor that which is evil, as well as to love and follow after that which is good; and to this end, the vices, as well as

the virtues, must have names by which they can be described and held up as things to be dreaded, loathed, and shunned. We regard the Hebrew-Greek diction of the New Testament as eminently plain and simple, and so indeed it is, as compared with the general dialect of Greek literature; but what a richness of vocabulary does it display with respect to all that concerns the moral, the spiritual, and even the intellectual interests of humanity! What a range of abstract thought, what an armory of dialectic weapons, what an enginery of vocal implements for operating on the human soul, do the Epistles of the learned Paul exhibit! The Gospel of the unschooled John throws forward most conspicuously another phase of language; for, as Paul appeals to the moral through the intellectual faculties, John, on the other hand, finds his way to the head by the channel of the heart, and his diction is of course in great part composed of the words which describe or excite the sensibilities, the better sympathies of our nature. Now the respective dialects of these two apostles could have existed only as the result of a long course of mental and religious training in the races who used the speech employed by them, and where such training has not been enjoyed, there no such vocabulary can be developed, and of course no such doctrine expressed.

Hence the translation of the Bible into the tongues of nations of low moral training has been found a matter of exceeding difficulty, and, in many instances, the translators have been obliged to content themselves with very loose approximations to the expression of the religious ideas of Christianity, with mere provisional phrases, which they necessarily employ for the time, and until, with more advanced mental culture, there shall grow up also a greater compass of vocabulary, and a fuller development of a dialect suited to convey moral as well as intellectual truth. And hence it is that in the propagation of a religion which appeals so powerfully to the thought, the sympathies, and the conscience of men, education and Christianization must go hand in hand; for the teacher cannot reach the heart of his pupil, until they have mutually aided each other in creating a common medium, through which they can confer on the deep matters of moral and spiritual truth.

The French boast that they have no word for *bribe*, and hence

argue that they are less accessible than other men to that species of official corruption, of which a pecuniary, or other material consideration, is the reward. But has not the reproach implied in the very word a useful influence in bringing the act to the consciousness of men as a shame and a sin? Can we fully comprehend the evil character of a wrong, until we have given it a specific objective existence by assigning to it a name which shall serve at once to designate and to condemn? And do not the jocular *pot de vin*, and other vague and trivial phrases, by which, in the want of a proper term to stigmatize the crime, French levity expresses it, indicate a lack of sensibility to the heinous nature of the transgression, and gloss over, and even half commend, the reception of unlawful fees, as at worst but a venial offence, the disgrace of which lies more in the detection than in the commission?*

I drew your attention, on a former occasion, to the remarkable completeness of the technical vocabulary of Christianity in Anglo-Saxon, as exemplified in the old translation of the Gospels; and I think it is much to be regretted that the great English theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not endeavor, at a period when it would have been comparatively easy, to infuse a still larger proportion of the native element into the moral and spiritual nomenclature they adopted. The extent to which Latin was used in theology by the Saxons themselves, seriously interfered with the formation of a vocabulary adapted to the metaphysics of Christianity, and we must remember that, as Latin was the only common language, and practicable means of communication, between the English Reformers and their teachers and brethren on the continent, the dialect of the former could hardly fail to be affected by the religious nomenclature of the latter.

* When Justinian negotiated with the Persian ambassador Isdiagunas that shameful convention, by which he purchased a truce of five years for two thousand pounds of gold, it was at first proposed that the money should be paid in annual instalments of four hundred pounds, but upon further consideration, it was thought better to pay the whole at once, in order that it might be called a present, rather than a tribute. *Tà νὰρ αἰσχρὰ δὲν ὄματα*, says Procopius, *ὅτι τὰ πράγματα ἐδόθησαν ἀνθρώποι ἐκ τοῦ ἐπιλείστον αἰσχρῆσαι*. De Bel. Goth. L. IV. cap. 15.

We have, nevertheless, and exclusively employ, many remarkable native English words to express the highest and most complex order of religious ideas, and the frequency and familiarity of their use implies an advanced spiritual culture among the primitive English, a philosophical conception of Christian doctrine, and a strong native susceptibility to religious impressions, as well as a remarkable power of apprehending abstruse principles, and of course a high standard of moral and intellectual character.

The word *atonement*, certainly one of the most important terms in the nomenclature of Christianity, is purely English, although its ending is French. The historical evidence is very strongly in favor of the etymology *at one*, and accordingly the derivative should mean either the reconciliation of man to his Creator, or a oneness of spirit between the two.* But this is not the usual theological sense, and the resemblance between *atone* and the German *Sühne*, and several older Gothic roots which involve the notion of expiation, furnishes some reason to suspect that the real origin of the word lies further back, though we cannot trace it to any known Saxon radical. *God, good, holy, bad, evil, sin, wicked, right, wrong, love, hate,† hope, wise, true, false,‡ life, death, soul, heaven, hell*, and their many derivatives,

* Robert of Gloucester has *at on*, in the sense of *agreed, reconciled* :

Wat halt it to telle longe ? bute heo were seþþe *at on*,
In gret loue longe y now, wan yt nolde oper gon.

P. 161.

So that the king & he
Were there so *at on* as hif mizte bise.

P. 509.

Many similar examples may be found in other early English writers. I have not observed the noun *atonement* in any writer before Tyndal (1536), who employs it in Romans v. 11. It is not found in the Wycliffite versions, I believe. Coverdale (1535) uses it, in Exodus xxix. 33, Leviticus iv. 20, 26, Romans v. 11, and in several other passages. It also occurs in Sir Thomas More's *Life of Richard III.*, Rastell's edition, p. 40, F., p. 41, C., as well as in the *Life of Edward V.*, ascribed to the same author, in Hardyng's Chronicles, 1543, p. 476 of Ellis's reprint.

† What a fine English definition of *hate* is that which Chaucer gives in the *Persones Tale*, "Hate is old wraþe."

Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.*, iv. 9, says : *Odium ira inveterata*

‡ We cannot perhaps make out an etymological relation between *false* and any *Mæso-Gothic* root, unless we connect it with *faldan*, to fold, Lat. *plicare*, allied to which are *simplex* and *duplex*, whence our *sim-*

are all genuine Anglo-Saxon, as are also many now obsolete words, belonging exclusively to the Christian religion, such as *housel*, for eucharist, *aneal*,* to administer extreme unction, though most of the words which Christianity ingrafted upon the religious vocabulary of Judaism, are in modern English represented by derivatives from Latin or Greek radicals.

Both the moral and the intellectual characteristics which the prevalence of Christian doctrine has impressed on modern civilized humanity, and the dialect belonging to that doctrine, are so special and peculiar, that the mutual relations between mind, and speech as the expression of mind, and as also a reagent upon it, in all matters connected with religion, are traced without any very serious difficulty but the reciprocal influence of word and thought in other connections, is, if not more obscure, at least less familiar. Take for example the tendency, in what are fashion-

plicity and *duplicity*. But the word occurs very early in all the Scandinavian and Teutonic languages, and there are several native radicals from either of which it may be supposed to be derived, if indeed we are to believe that the name of so fundamental an idea as that of the false must necessarily be borrowed from any other word. Ihre, in arguing against the etymology from the Latin *falsus*, regrets that he is obliged to recognize the word as indigenous, and exclaims, *Quam vellem in laudem gentis nostræ dici posse, illam mendacia et fallendi artes ne nominare quidem potuisse, antequam id à Latinis didicerit!* *Ihre, Lex. Suio-Goth.* under *falsk*.

The comparison of the moral significance of particular words in Anglo-Saxon and English, presents many points of interest. A single one shall suffice. *Old*, which is now a term of reproach, was, strange as it may seem in these *fast* days of Young America and Young England, a respectful and even reverential epithet with the Anglo-Saxons; so much so, in fact, that it was the common designation of noble, exalted, and excellent things. *Ealdor* was often used for *prince, ruler, governor*; *ealdordom* was *authority, magistracy, principality*; *ealdorlic, principal, excellent*; *ealdor-apostole, chief-apostle*; *ealdor-burh, chief city or metropolis*, and *ealdorman, alderman, nobleman*.

* *Ele* or *æl*, the root of the word *aneal*, is generally considered an Anglo-Saxon radical, but its resemblance in form and meaning to the Latin *oleum*, or rather to the Greek *έλαιον*, renders it probable that the name, as well as the thing, (*olive oil*), found its way from Southern Europe into the Anglo-Saxon and the cognate languages and nations, at so early a period that the history of its introduction can be no longer traced. *Housel* (A. S. *husel*) has been suspected to be connected with the Latin *hostia*, but the occurrence of the word (*hunsel*) in Uphilas seems to be a sufficient refutation of this etymology.

able, and claim to be refined, circles in this country, and perhaps even more especially in England, to the use of vague and indefinite phrases, not so much to hide a deficiency of ideas, as to cover discreet reticences of opinion, or prudent suppressions of natural and spontaneous feeling. The practice of employing these empty sounds—they have no claim to be called words—is founded partly in a cautious desire of avoiding embarrassing self-committals, and partly in that vulgar prejudice of polite society, which proscribes the expression of decided sentiments of admiration, approval or dissatisfaction, or of precise and definite opinions upon any subject, as contrary to the laws of good taste, indicative of a want of knowledge of the world, and, moreover, arrogant and pedantic. In this notion there is just enough of truth to disguise the falsehood of the theory, and to apologize for the mischievous tendencies of the practice. Doubtless, if we have no clear, decided, and well-grounded opinions, no ardor of feeling, and no convictions of duty, in reference to the subject of conversation, we should modestly avoid the use of pointed language; and, at the same time, a due regard for the feelings, the prejudices, the ignorance, of others, will dictate a certain reserve and caution in the expression of opinions or sentiments which may wound their pride, or violently shock their prepossessions.

But the habit of using vague language at all, and especially the current devices for hinting much while affirming nothing, are in a high degree injurious both to precision and justness of thought, and to sincerity, frankness, and manliness of character. Every vague and uncertain proposition has its false side, and the confusion of thought it implies is not more offensive to good taste, than its deceptive character to sound morality, and than both to true refinement.

There is a fact of immense moral significance, which seems to have been only in modern, indeed in comparatively recent, times, brought into notice and made matter of distinct consciousness, though accessible to the observation of men ever since words first had a moral meaning. Its discovery is perhaps connected with the increased attention which individual words, their form and force, have received in the study of the philosophy of language. It is one of those instances where, in the progress of humanity, we come suddenly upon the outcrop of one of those great truths,

which, like some rock-strata, extend for many days' journey but a few inches beneath the surface, and then burst abruptly into full view.*

The fact to which I allude is that language is not a dead, unelastic, passive implement, but a POWER, which, like all natural powers, reacts on that which it calls into exercise. It is a psychological law, though we know not upon what ultimate principle it rests, that the mere giving of verbal utterance to any strong emotion or passion, even if the expression be unaccompanied by any other outward act, stimulates and intensifies the excitement of feeling to that degree that when the tongue is once set free, the reason is dethroned, and brute nature becomes the master of the man.† The connection between the apparently insignificant cause and the terrible effect belongs to that portion of the immaterial man, whose workings, in so many fields of moral and intellectual action, lie below our consciousness, and can be detected by no effort of voluntary self-inspection. But it is an undoubted fact, and a fact of whose fearful import most men become adequately aware only when it is almost too late to profit by the knowledge, that the forms in which we clothe the outward expression of the emotions, and even of the speculative opinions, within us, react with mighty force upon the heart and intellect which are the seat of those passions and those thoughts. So long as we have not betrayed by unequivocal words the secret of the emotions that sway the soul, so long as we are uncommitted by formal expressions to particular principles and opinions, so long we are strong to subdue the rising passion, free to modify the theories upon which we aim to fashion our external life. Fiery words are the hot blast that inflames the fuel of our passionate nature, and formulated doctrine a hedge that confines the discursive wandering of the thoughts.

* Thus the iniquity of the slave-trade was suddenly brought home, as a sin, to the conscience of otherwise good men, who had for many years pursued it without one reproachful feeling, one thought of its enormous wickedness.

† Spenser was not ignorant of this important law.

"But his enemy
Had kindled such coles of displeasure,
That the goodman noulde stay his leasure,
But home him hasted with furious heate,
Encreasing his wrath with many a threate."

The Shepheards Calendar, Februarie, 1604.

In a personal altercation, it is most often the stimulus men give themselves by stinging words, that impels them to violent acts, and in argumentative discussions, we find the most convincing support to our conclusions in the internal echo of the dogmas we have ourselves pronounced. Hence extreme circumspection in the use of vituperative language, and in the adoption of set phrases implying particular opinions, is not less a prudential than a moral duty, and it is equally important that we strengthen in ourselves kindly sympathies, generous impulses, noble aims, and lofty aspirations, by habitual freedom in their expression, and that we confirm ourselves in the great political, social, moral, and religious truths, to which calm investigation has led us as final conclusions, by embodying them in forms of sound words.

Not merely the strongest thinkers, and ablest and most convincing reasoners, but many of the most impressive and persuasive rhetoricians of modern times, have been remarkable rather for moderation than exaggeration in expression. It was a maxim of Webster's, that violence of language was indicative of feebleness of thought and want of reasoning power, and it was his practice rather to understate than overstate the strength of his confidence in the soundness of his own arguments, and the logical necessity of his conclusions. He kept his auditor constantly in advance of him, by suggestion rather than by strong asseveration, by a calm exposition of considerations which ought to excite feeling in the heart of both speaker and hearer, not by an undignified and theatrical exhibition of passion in himself. And this indeed is the sound practical interpretation of the Horatian precept:

Si vis me flere, dolendum est
Primum ipsi tibi.

Wouldst thou unseal the fountain of my tears,
Thyself the signs of grief must show.

To the emotion of the hearer, the poet applies a stronger word, *flere*, to weep, than to that of the speaker or actor, who best accomplishes the aims of his art by a more mitigated display of the passions he would excite in the breast of his auditor.

Although our inherent or acquired moral and intellectual character and tendencies, and our habitual vocabulary and forms of speech, are influential upon each other, and though both are sub-

ject to the control of the will, yet, nevertheless, their reciprocal action is not usually matter of consciousness with us. While therefore we are *free* in the employment of particular sets of words, yet as the selection of those words depends upon obscure processes unintelligible even to ourselves, we cannot be said, in strict propriety of speech, to choose our dialect, though we are undoubtedly responsible for its moral character, because we are responsible for the moral condition which determines it. So limited is our self-knowledge in this respect, that most men would be unable to produce a good caricature of their own individual speech, and the shibboleth of our personal dialect is generally unknown to ourselves, however ready we may be to remark the characteristic phraseology of others. It is a mark of weakness, of poverty of speech, or at least of bad taste, to continue the use of pet words, or other peculiarities of language, after we have once become conscious of them as such. In dialect as in dress, individuality, founded upon any thing but general harmony and superior propriety, is offensive, and good taste demands that each shall please by its total impression, not by its distinguishable details.

LECTURE XI.

VOCABULARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

IV.

I ENDEAVORED in the last lecture to point out some of the relations between the moral and intellectual character of nations or individuals, and the words of a given language employed, at particular periods, by the people or the man. But speech is affected also by humbler, more transitory, and more superficial influences, and whatever care we may exercise in this respect, it is scarcely possible that our ordinary discourse should not exhibit indelible traces of the associations and accidents of childhood, as well as of the occupations and the cares, the objects and studies, the material or social struggles, the triumphs or defeats, in short, all the external conditions that affect humanity in riper years. Every mode of life, too, has its technical vocabulary,* which we may exclude from our habitual language, its *cant*, which we cannot; and hence an acute observer, well schooled in men and things, can read, in a brief casual conversation with strangers, much of the history, as well as of the opinions and the principles, of all the interlocutors.

Writers of works of fiction are much inclined to represent their characters as constantly employing the language of their calling, and as prone to apply its technicalities to objects of an entirely diverse nature. Now this may, in the drama, where formal narrative, description, and explanation of all sorts are to be avoided, serve as a convenient conventional mode of escaping the asides, the soliloquies, the confidential disclosures of the actor to his audience respecting his character, position, and purposes, and the

* How are technical words of new arts formed—*e. g.* of printing? A complete history of words of this class from the beginning would be as instructive as curious.

other awkward devices to which even the expertest histrionic artisans are sometimes obliged to resort, to make the action more intelligible. It is better that a character in a play should use professional phrases, by way of indicating his occupation, than that he should tell the audience in set words, "I am a merchant, a physician, or a lawyer," but after all, considered as a representation of the actual language of life, it is a violation of truth of costume to cram with technical words the conversation of a technical man.* All men, except the veriest, narrowest pedants in their craft, avoid the language of the shop, and a small infusion of native sense of propriety prevents the most ignorant laborer from obtruding the dialect of his art upon those with whom he communicates in reference to matters not pertaining to it. Every man affects to be, if not socially above, yet intellectually independent of, and superior to, his calling, and if in this respect his speech bewray him, it will be by words used in mere joke, or by such peculiarities of speech, as, without properly belonging to the exercise of his profession, have nevertheless been occasioned by it. A sailor will not be likely to interlard his go-ashore talk with clew-lines, main-sheets, and halliards, but if he has occasion to mention the great free port at the head of the Adriatic, he will call it not Trieste, but *Tryeast*; and if he speaks of our commercial representative at a maritime town, he will be sure to style that official the American *counsel*, not the American consul. In fact, classes, guilds, professions, borrow their characteristics of speech from the affectations, not the serious interests, of their way of life.

Technical nomenclature rarely extends beyond the sphere to which it more appropriately belongs, and the language of a nation is not perceptibly affected by the phraseology of a class, unless that class is so numerous as to constitute the majority, or unless its interests are of so wide-spread and conspicuous a nature as to be forced upon the familiar observation of the whole people. England has been distinguished above all the nations of the earth

* King James, in his treatise of the Airt of Scottis Poesie, lays down a contrary rule :

And finally, quhatsumeuer be zour subiect, to vse *vocabula artis*, quhairby ze may the mair vivelle represent that persoun, quhais pairt ze paint out.—Chap. III.

for commercial enterprise and mechanical production, but her navigation is confined to the sea-coast, her manufacturing industry to comparatively restricted centres. Of course, so far as foreign trade and domestic fabrics are concerned, the names of the new objects which they have brought to the notice of all English-born people, have become familiar to all; nevertheless, we do not find that metaphors from the dialect of the sea, or technicalities from the phraseology of the workshop, are much more frequent in the literature or popular speech of England than in those of countries with little navigation or mechanical industry. On the other hand, figures drawn from agriculture, which is universal, and from those arts which, like spinning and weaving, the fishery and the chase, in early stages of society entered into the life of every household, are become essential elements of both the poetical and the everyday dialect of every civilized people.

In language, general effects are produced only by causes general in their immediate operation. Nor is the fact that new words, originated by causes local in their source and apparently trivial and transitory in action, not unfrequently pass into the common vocabulary of the nation, at all in conflict with this principle, for, in such cases, the general reception of the word is indicative of a general want of it, to express some common idea just making its way into distinct consciousness, and waiting only for a formula, an appropriate mode of utterance.

Whenever a people, by emigration into a different soil and climate, by a large influx of foreigners into its territory, by political or religious revolutions, or other great and comprehensive social changes, is brought into contact with new objects, new circumstances, new cares, labors, and duties, it is obviously under the necessity of framing or borrowing new words, or of modifying the received meaning of old ones, in such way as to express the new conditions of material existence, the new aims and aptencies, to which the change in question gives birth.*

* I regret that I cannot here fully avail myself of the remarkable illustration of the truth of the above statement, afforded by the great changes which have taken place in colloquial and familiarly written Italian during the last quarter of a century. I may, perhaps, on another occasion, have an opportunity of giving some examples of really important gains, not only in an enlarged vocabulary, but in directness of style and in definiteness of expression.

Twenty-five years ago one of the first things that struck an Englishman or

If we could suppose the whole population of a Greek island to be transported to America, dispersed among us, and, after being detained long enough to learn our language and forget their own, to be restored to their native soil, to resume their former habits of life, and thenceforward to continue to exist, without communication with neighboring islands or foreign countries, but otherwise in the same circumstances under which the people of the Grecian archipelago and mainland have formed the Greek character and the Greek speech, they and their posterity would certainly not re-create and re-develop the Hellenic tongue, but they would retain the English as their national language, modifying it according to the exigencies of their situation, and it would, in the course of time, become a very different dialect from that which they had brought back with them. But what would be the nature of the

an American, in familiar intercourse with an Italian, was the endless circumlocutions made use of by the latter in both his oral and his written communications. A statement which either of the two former would make in five lines, would require pages from the pen of the Italian. This difference arose, not from lack of flexibility in the Italian language, but from the fact that custom had established certain stereotyped introductory and leave-taking phrases, which, from the national point of view, could not be omitted without discourtesy. The new condition of things, brought about in Italy by the astounding political revolutions that have made it a great and independent nation, now leaves the Italian as little time for formalities as has the American or Englishman. Consequently his advertisements, his railway and hotel notices, even his notes of familiar correspondence, are cut short proportionally. The following may serve as specimens of recent colloquial and journalistic phraseology :

Irreperibilità del destinatario—impossibility of finding the person addressed. *Caldeggiare la candidatura*—to be active in promoting the election of the ticket. *Slatinare*—to speak Latin badly. *Smelare*—to take honey from the honeycomb. * * *e questi quattro insieme ministeriazzerrebbero tutto il gruppo piemontese*—and these four together would carry the whole Piedmontese faction over to the side of the Ministry. *Svechiare l'Enciclopedia*—to publish a revised edition of the Encyclopaedia. *Fare una gita al Vesuvio per curiosare l'eruzione*. Here the word *curiosare* is evidently not used in the sense given in Tommaseo's Dictionary, namely, *to show idle or impertinent curiosity*, and as the true source of growth in a language is in the spontaneous popular speech, this word will no doubt gradually acquire the more worthy meaning. The following imaginary conversation between two Italian members of Parliament is taken from a leading Roman paper : "*Ma, capisci? Il Minghetti!*" "*Ma che Minghetti noi vai minghettando!*" This forcibly recalls a scene in Shakespeare : *Mrs. Page—Come, mother Prat, come, give me your hand. Ford—I'll prat her!*

change? Probably not in radical syntactical principle or other grammatical peculiarities, but mainly, doubtless, in the vocabulary.* New words would be formed by derivation or composition, to express a multitude of objects, processes, and conditions for which English has no appropriate designations, but a still greater divergence from the original tongue would be produced by the employment of English words in new or modified senses. All this, in fact, is just what has been done, by the people of whom I am speaking, with the language of their country. Causes, to which I shall refer in discussing the subject of grammatical inflections, have considerably modified the Greek syntax in the passage from old Hellenic to modern Romainic, but a greater apparent change has been produced by the introduction of new words; a greater still, which is not apparent except upon a considerable familiarity with both classic and modern Greek, by the use of classical words in senses very diverse from those which originally belonged to them.

A more familiar illustration may be found in the speech of our own country. At the period when European colonists first took possession of the Atlantic coast of America, natural history had taught men little of the inexhaustible variety of the material creation. The discoverers expected to find the same animals, the same vegetables, the same minerals, and even the same arts, with which observation had made them familiar in corresponding latitudes of the eastern hemisphere. They came therefore prepared to recognize resemblances, not to detect differences, between the products of the old world and the new, and naturally saw what they sought and expected. Their early reports accordingly make

* Hervas mentions the case of a South American language which, retaining its original grammar, had substituted for its native vocabulary one consisting entirely of Spanish words; but this statement must be received with some allowance, for we can hardly suppose that all the native roots had been absolutely obliterated. A language which has totally changed its vocabulary, as in the instance above cited, does not remain the same language even though its grammatical form continues unaltered. New words imply new ideas the force of which cannot depend entirely upon grammatical combination. Thus languages from different sources might approximate in form, though not in radical signification. Would they therefore become one? Man and many of the lower animals are osteologically the same, but we do not therefore call them by a common name.

constant mention of plants, animals, and mechanical processes, as of common occurrence in America, but which we now know never to have existed on this continent. Longer acquaintance with the nature and art of the newly discovered territory corrected the errors of the first hasty observation; but there was still, though almost never an identity, yet often a strong analogy, between the trees, the quadrupeds, the fish, and the fowl of England, of France, and of Spain, on the one hand, and of Canada, New England, Virginia, and Mexico on the other. The native names for all these objects were hard to pronounce, harder still to remember, and the colonists, therefore, took the simple and obvious method of applying to the native products of America the names of the European plants and animals which most nearly resembled them. Thus, we have the oak, the pine, the poplar, the willow, the fir, the beach, and the ash; the trout, the perch, and the dace; the bear, the fox, and the rabbit; the pigeon, the partridge, the robin, and the sparrow; and in South America, the lion and the ostrich; and yet, though in many instances the American and the transatlantic object designated by these names belong to the same genus, and are only distinguished by features which escape all eyes but those of the scientific naturalist, in perhaps none are they specifically identical, while, not unfrequently, the application of the European name is founded on very slight resemblances.

Since the Norman Conquest, English, as spoken upon its native soil, has been largely exposed to but one of the causes of change which I have noticed. I refer, of course, to the great religious revolution of the sixteenth century, which I believe to be the most powerful of the single influences that have concurred to give to the English race and their speech the character which now distinguishes them, as well from the rest of the world as from their former selves.* At the same time, in all the Gothic languages,

* The opinions expressed by Michelet, on the moral and religious character of English literature, are a remarkable exemplification of the great difficulty of acquiring such a mastery over a foreign tongue, as to be thoroughly competent to exercise the function of literary criticism upon works written in it. In a note to p. 158, Vol. V., of his *Histoire de France*, Michelet says: "Je ne me rappelle pas d'avoir vu le nom de Dieu dans Shakespeare; s'il y est c'est bien rarement, par hasard, et sans l'ombre d'un sentiment religieux." Mrs.

our own included, both the special vocabulary of each, and the use and signification of the words they possess in common, have been much affected by other causes, partly peculiar to one or more, partly acting alike upon all.

Take as an instance the word *winter*. When Icelandic was spoken in all the countries of Scandinavia, time was computed by *winters*, because in those cold climates the winter monopolized a large portion of the year, and from its length, its hardships and necessities, its boisterous festivities, the facilities it afforded for the pursuit of certain important occupations and favorite sports, and the obstacles it interposed to the prosecution of others, it impressed itself on the minds of the people as not only the longest but the weightiest portion of the twelvemonth, and it therefore stood for the whole year. For the same reason, *winter* was a very common word for year in Anglo-Saxon, and it continued to be employed in that sense in English to near the close of the fifteenth century. In Iceland itself, where there is little change in the habits of material and social life, it is still thus used. But in modern England, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, the advancement of civilization and physical improvement has given to man the mastery over all the seasons. The campaigns of feudal warfare, whose marches were performed with greater ease over ice and snow, have ceased; the chase, a winter occupation, is no longer an important resource; agriculture has widely extended her domain, and the harvest months are the great epoch of the year, and characterize it as a period of trial or of blessings. Accordingly, in all these kingdoms men now count time not by winters, but by *harvests*, for that is the primitive signification of our English word *year*, and its representative in the cognate lan-

Cowden Clarke's Concordance cites from Shakespeare many hundreds of passages in which the name of God is introduced, frequently, indeed, in profane phrases; but it occurs in expressions of reverent and devout religious sentiment quite as often in the works of the great English dramatist as in the current French literature of the corresponding period. The remarks of Michelet upon English literature generally, which precede and follow the above criticism upon Shakespeare, and in which he characterizes the *belle et sombre littérature Anglaise*, as *sceptique, Judaique, satanique, pour resumer, antichrétienne*, are extremely amusing, and might well be supposed to have originated with the spiritual father of the American Indian whom he quotes as saying: "*Le Christ, c'était un Français que les Anglais crucifièrent à Londres.*"

guages.* In the figurative style, whether in poetry or in prose, we often put a season for the year, and in this case the subject determines the choice of the season. Thus, of an aged man we say: 'His life has extended to a hundred winters,' but in speaking of the years of a blooming girl, we connect with them images of gladness, the season of flowers, and say: 'She has seen sixteen summers.' We have in English a similar application of another familiar word suggestive of the phases of the year, and it is curious that the same expression is used in Scandinavia. In Denmark and Sweden, as well as in England, the gentlemen of the chase and the turf reckon the age of their animals by springs, the ordinary birth-season of the horse, and a colt is said to be so many years old next *grass*.

Our adjective *pecuniary* is familiarly known to be derived from the Latin *pecunia*, money, which itself comes from *pecus*, cattle, and acquired the meaning of money, because money is the representative of property, and in early society cattle constituted the most valuable species of property; or, as others suppose, because a coin, which was of about the average value of one head of sheep or kine, was stamped with the image of the creature. Our English word *cattle*† is derived, by a reverse process, from the

* I am aware that this is not the received etymology of *year*, nor do I propose it with by any means entire confidence. At the same time, I think the identity of the words for harvest and for the twelvemonth, *ár*, in the cognate Icelandic and the dialects derived from it, an argument of considerable weight in support of the derivation, which, however, finds still stronger evidence in the analogies of our primitive mother-tongue. In Anglo-Saxon, *ear* signifies an ear of grain, and by supplying the collective prefix *ge*, common to all the Teutonic languages, we have *gear*, an appropriate expression for *harvest*, and at the same time a term, which, as well as *winter*, was employed as the name of the entire year. The corresponding words in the cognate languages admit of a similar derivation, and this to me seems a more probable etymology, than those by which these words are connected with remoter roots.

This etymology, though original with me, I find has been anticipated by Terwen and Bosworth.

† The derivation from *caput*, (*capitale*.) a *head*, as we say, "so many head of sheep, or oxen," though supported by high authorities, is improbable; because among other reasons, the words, *chatel*, *catalla* (pl.), &c., were applied to what lawyers call *chattels real*, that is, certain rights in *real estate* distinct from the *fee*, or absolute title, and to personal property in general, long before *cattle*, or any other derivation from the same root, was used specially as a designation of domestic quadrupeds. This view of the subject is confirmed

Low Latin *catalla*, a word of unknown etymology, signifying movable property generally, or what the English law calls *chattels*. In Old English, *cattle* had the same meaning, and it is but recently that it has been confined to domestic quadrupeds as the most valuable of ordinary movable possessions.

In a former lecture, by way of illustrating my views of the value of etymology as pursued by what may be called the simple historical, in distinction from the more ambitious linguistic, method, I traced the word *grain* from its source, through its secondary, to its present signification, in one of its senses. *Corn*, the Gothic etymological equivalent of *grain*, has also an interesting history, and it serves as a good exemplification of the modifications which the use and meaning of words undergo from the influence of local conditions. Like *granum*, it signifies both a seed and a minute particle, and the two words are not so unlike in form as to make it all improbable that they are derived from a common radical, in some older cognate language, probably allied to the verb to *grow*, and originally meaning *seed*. *Corn* was early applied, as a generic term, to the cereal grains or breadstuffs, the most useful of seeds, and in fact almost the only ones regularly employed as the food of man. The word is still current in all countries where the Gothic languages are spoken, but its signification is, in popular use, chiefly confined to the particular grain most important in the rural economy of each. Thus in England, wheat, being the most considerable article of cultivated produce, is generally called corn. In Scotland this name is given to oats; in most parts of Germany to rye; in the Scandinavian kingdoms

by the fact of the non-existence of a cognate word with the meaning of *cattle* in the Italian and Spanish languages, which could hardly have failed to possess it, had it been really of Latin etymology.

Chatel has an apparent relationship both to the French *acheter*, to purchase, and to the Saxon *cedþian*, Icelandic *Kaup*, German *Kaufen*, of the same signification.

Celtic etymologists derive *acheter* from the Celtic *achap*, a word of the same radical meaning; but as the Goths, in early ages, were a much more commercial and maritime people than the Celts, it is more probable that the root is Gothic than Celtic.

Capitale, *chatel*, *acheter*, *chattels* and *cattle*, are, therefore, in all probability, cognate with the Saxon *cedþian*, and not with *caput*. Schmid, *Gesetz der Angel-Sachsen*, 2d Edition, 1858, glossary, under *capitale* appears to adopt this etymology. See Wedgwood, *Etym. Dict.*, Art. *Chattels*.

to barley; and in the United States, to our great agricultural staple, maize, or Indian corn; the name in every instance being habitually applied to the particular grain on which the prosperity of the husbandman and the sustenance of the laborer chiefly depend.*

In the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, and in other warm climates, animal food is not much used, and bread is emphatically the staff of life. Hence in those nations, as with the ancient Romans, the word *bread* stands for *food* generally, other edibles being considered a mere relish or accompaniment, and this is still true of some colder climates, where the poverty of the laboring classes confines them in the main to a like simple diet. The English figurative use of *bread* for the same purpose, however, is not founded on the habits of the people, but is borrowed from other literatures. The word *meat* has undergone a contrary process. The earliest occurrence of this word in any cognate language is the form *mats* in Ulphilas, where it signifies food in general. The Swedish verb *mätta*, to satiate or satisfy, and other allied words, suggest the probability that the original sense of the radical, in its application to food, was that which satisfies hunger, † though it must be confessed that great uncertainty attends all attempts to trace back words essentially so primitive to still simpler forms and less complex significations. The Anglo-Saxon and oldest English meaning of *meat* is food, and I believe it is always used in that sense in our English translations of the Bible. In England, and especially in the United States, animal food is now the most prominent article of diet, and *meat* has come to signify almost exclusively the flesh of land animals.

The primitive abundance of the oak and of nut-bearing trees, in England and in the northern portions of Continental Europe, facilitated the keeping of swine to an extent which, now that the

* In Italy, *cicaja* (Latin, *cibraria*) is the common name given to all kinds of *pulse*, as pease, beans, etc., these constituting a large portion of the food of the poorer Italians.

† The Mosso-Gothic *matjan*, *to eat*, is more probably a derivative, than the primitive, of *mats*, and if so, corresponds to our verb *to feed* upon. On the other hand the resemblance between *matjan* and the Latin *masticare* would seem to refer both verbs and their derivatives to a root expressive of the mechanical process of eating.

forests have been converted into arable land, is neither convenient nor economically advantageous, and the flesh of swine constituted a more important part of the aliment of the people than that of any other domestic animal. The word *flesh* appears to have originally signified pork only, and in the form, a *fitch* of bacon, French, *flèche de lard*, the primitive sense is still preserved; but, with the extension of agriculture, the herds of swine became less numerous, and as the flesh of other quadrupeds entered more and more into use, the sense of the word was extended so as to include them also. *Flesh* and *meat* have now become nearly synonymous, the difference being that the former embraces the fibrous part of animals generally, without reference to its uses, the latter that of such only as are employed for human food. At present we use, as a compendious expression for all the materials of both vegetable and animal diet, *bread* and *meat*. Piers Ploughman says:

Fleshe and breed bothe
To riche and to poore;

and a verse or two lower,

And all manere of men
That through *mete* and drynke libbeth.

The English word *bribe* and its derivatives, generally but perhaps erroneously traced to the French *bribe*, a *morsel of bread*, a *scrap* or *fragment*, present an interesting instance of a change of meaning. *Bribery*, in Old English, meant not secret corruption, but theft, rapine, open violence, and very often official extortion. Thus Julyana Berners, in her treatise of Fysshynge with the Angle, in speaking of the injustice and cruelty of robbing private fish-ponds and other waters, says: "It is a ryght shamefull dede to any nobleman to do that that theuys and *brybours* done."* Lord Berners, in his translation of Froissart, describes the captain of a band of the irregular soldiery called 'companions,' as the "greatest *brybour* and robber in all France," and Pale

* Alle othere in bataille
Ben y-holde *brybours*,
Pylours and pyke-harneys.

Piers Ploughman, 14447.

grave gives *I pull* and *I pyll* as synonyms of *I bribe*. At that dark period, the subject had "no rights which" his rulers "were bound to respect." The ministers of civil and ecclesiastical power needed not to conceal their rapacity, and they availed themselves of the authority belonging to their positions for the purpose of undisguised plunder. But when by the light, first of religious, and then of what naturally followed, civil liberty, men were able to see that it was of the essence of law, that it should bind the governors as well as the governed, him who makes, him who administers, and him who serves under it alike, it became necessary for official robbery to change its mode of procedure, and mantle with the cloak of secrecy the hand that clutched the spoil. But though the primitive form of this particular iniquity is gone, the thing remains, and the unlawful gains of power, once seized with strong hand, or extorted with menacing clenched fist, but now craved with open palm, are still *bribes*. Formerly the official extortioner or rapacious dignitary was styled a *briber*, and he was said to *bribe* when he boldly grasped his prey, but now the tempter is the *briber*, and the timid recipient is the *bribed*.*

Soldier, from the Latin *solidus*, † the name of a coin, meant originally one who performed military service, not in fulfilment of the obligations of the feudal law, but upon contract, and for stipulated pay. *Soldier*, therefore, in its primary signification, is identical with *hireling* or *mercenary*. But the regular profession

* Cranmer, Instruction into Christian Religion, Sermon VII., uses *bribe* in the modern sense: "And the fudge himselfe is a thefe before God, when he for *brybes* or any corrupcion doth wittingly and wyllingly give wrong judgement." But, in Sermon X., he has this passage: "These rauenyng woules, that be euer thrystynge after other mennes goodes * * * less the faouure both of God and man, and ar called of euery man extorcioners, *brybers*, pollers and piellers, deuourers of widowes houses."

And in the Instruction of Prayer, on the Fourth Petition, "But they that delygth in superfluitie of gorgyous apparel and deynty fare * * * comenly do deceaue the nedye, *brybe*, and pyle from them."

† Etymologists of the Celtic school affirm that *soldat* is from the Celtic *souldar*, a feudal vassal bound to military service, and from *soldat* they derive the French *solde* and *solder*, and the German *Sold*, *besolden*; that is, they find the origin of a group of words to every one of which the notion of *pay* is fundamental, in a word the proper sense of which excludes that notion, for the very essence of feudal obligation is that it requires service *without* pay. *Lucus à non lucendo*.

of arms is held to be favorable to the development of those generous and heroic traits of character which, more than any of the gentler virtues, have in all ages excited the admiration of men. Hence, since standing armies, composed of troops who serve for pay, have afforded to military men the means of a systematic professional training, including the regular cultivation of the traits in question, we habitually ascribe to the soldier qualities precisely the reverse of those which we connect with the terms *hireling* and *mercenary*, and though the words are the etymological equivalents of each other, *soldior* has become a peculiarly honorable designation, while *hireling* and *mercenary* are employed only in an offensive sense.

We may find in the cognate languages examples of changes of meaning dependent upon the same principles as these illustrations. Among the articles of merchandise supplied to the population of Denmark and Norway by the Hanse towns, during the commercial monopoly they so long enjoyed, one of the most important was common pepper, and the clerks in the Hanse trading factories in the Scandinavian seaports were popularly called *Pebersvende*, *pepper-boys*. By the general regulations of the Hanse towns, these clerks were obliged to remain unmarried, and hence *Pebersvend*, *pepper-boy*, became, and still is, the regular Danish word for *single-man*, or *old bachelor*.

The herring-fishery was long the most lucrative branch of the maritime industry of Holland, and was the means by which a large number of the inhabitants of that country acquired their livelihood. *Nering*,—German *Nahrung*, in Dutch signifies properly nourishment, sustenance, and, figuratively, the business or occupation by which men earn their bread. The importance of the pursuit of which we have just spoken made it emphatically the *nering*, or vocation of the Dutch seamen, and *ter nering varen* means to go on a fishing-cruise. The common English and American designation of bookselling and booksellers as *the trade* is a similar instance.

The Greek *μυστήριον* meant originally the secret doctrines and ceremonies connected with the worship of particular divinities. In the Middle Ages, the most difficult and delicate processes of many of the mechanical arts were kept religiously secret, and hence in all the countries of Europe those arts were themselves

called *mysterics*, as mechanical trades still are in the dialect of the English law. Thus, when a boy is apprenticed to a tanner or a shoe-maker, the legal instrument, or indenture, by which he is bound, stipulates that he shall be taught the art and *mystery* of tanning or shoe-making. Afterwards, *mystery* came to designate, in common speech, any regular occupation, so that a man's *mystery* was his trade, his employment, the profession by which he earned his bread,* and as men are most obviously classed and characterized by their habitual occupations, the question which so often occurs in old English writers, 'What mister wight is that?' means, what is that man's employment, and, consequently, condition in life? What manner of man is he? In French, the word has had a different history. From *mysterium*, in the sense of a trade or art, comes *métier*, of the same signification, and because, in certain provinces, the art of weaving was the most important and gainful of the mechanic arts, first weaving, and then the implement by which it is exercised, received by way of excellence the name *métier*, which now signifies *a loom*.†

* In youthe he lerned hadde a good mistere,
He was a wel good wright, a carpentere.

Prol. to *Canterbury Tales*.

† This etymology seems to me more probable than the usual one, which derives *mister* and *métier* from the Latin *ministerium*, because the *n* in *ministerium* is radical, and in such combinations is generally, though indeed not universally, retained in French and English derivatives. The earliest instance I have met with of the use of this word in English, (or semi-Saxon,) is in the extracts from the Rule of Nuns in the *Reliquæ Antiquæ*, vol. II., p. 2: "Marthe *meostor* is to fede povre," where indeed the sense favors the derivation from *ministerium*. The old French and English *maistris*, craft, art, science, probably from the Latin *magister* (*magisterium*) and *mister*, resemble each other in use and meaning, and the three words, *mister*, *maistris*, and *mystery* are so nearly alike in form, that they might readily be confounded in signification. The Spanish *menester*, need or necessity, is doubtless from *ministerium*, and the English *mister*, used in that sense, must probably be referred to the same source, but the signification of *necessity* is so remote from that of *occupation*, that it seems more reasonable to adopt a separate etymology for each. Halliwell even derives *mistry* or *mystery* in the sense of an occupation, from *mister*. The Portuguese *mestre* has been adopted into Hindostanee in the form *mistri*, in the sense of a *foreman*, especially as applied to a mason or bricklayer; and in the business accounts of European overseers in India it has passed into *mystery*.

Few words have undergone greater and more varied changes of meaning than the Latin *species*. *Species* is derived from *specio*, an old verb

I have alluded to the remarkable fact, that words, like material substances, are changed, worn-out, exhausted of their meaning, and at last rendered quite unserviceable, by long use. To this law, both their form and their signification are subject. In here speaking of form, I do not refer to grammatical changes of ending and inflections, which will be the subject of future lectures, and which are in a great measure due to other causes, but to modifications produced by that negligence of treatment which is the result of close familiarity with any object.* Examples of this are the abbreviated and otherwise mutilated pet names, by which servants, children, and intimate associates are called. It may be laid down as a general rule, that words most frequently employed are hastily and carelessly pronounced, and that, in inflected languages, they are, with very few exceptions, irregular in form. In this way often grows up a distinction between the written and the spoken languages, which, in some cases, is carried

signifying, *I see*. Species, then, is that which is seen, the visible form of an object, "havyngc sothli the *spice* [or licnesse] of pite, forsothe denynghe the vertu of it." (Wycl., 2. Tim. iii. 5.) But things are known and distinguished most frequently by their visible forms, and related things have like forms. Hence, among other senses, species acquired that of *kind*, or natural class, which is its present most usual import. It was then popularly applied to designate the different *kinds* or classes of merchandise, and as the drugs, perfumes, and condiments of the East were the most important articles of merchandise, they were called, par excellence, species, *spezie* in Italian, *épices* in French, *spices* in English, and an apothecary is still termed *speziale* in Italy, his shop a *spezeria*, his drugs *spezierie*. Again, species is the visible form of a thing, as distinguished from that which symbolically, or conventionally, represents it, and hence, when notes of governments, banks, or individuals were brought into use as representatives of *money*, payments in actual coin were said to be payments in *specie*, in contradistinction from payments in the conventional equivalent of money, and *specie* now means gold and silver coin.

It is curious that when *spezie*, the common term for different *kinds* of merchandise, was restricted in Italy to drugs and spices, as the most important of them, *genere* or *genero* (Latin *genus*), a group or assemblage of *species*, took its place as a general designation of vendible wares, and is now used for *goods*, as *generi coloniali*, colonial, or as we say, West India goods.

* The many changes of form which the Latin *senior*, elder, has undergone, are no doubt due to this negligence. Neapolitan, *Si*, (query, Arabic *Sidi*?); Genoese, *Scio*; Tuscan, *Ser*; N. Italy, *Gnor*, *Sior*; French, *Seigneur*, *Sieur*, *Sire*; English, *Sire*, *sir*; Catalan, *En*, *n'*, fem. *na*. See also the various forms in Italian of the Latin *vinum* (Gr. *οἶνος*), *vino*, *vin*, *vi*, *ino*, *i*.

so far that the formal rules of pronunciation observed by the best speakers in conversation, and in reading or in set discourse, are so different as almost to amount to a difference of dialect, and while he who reads as he speaks would shock by the vulgarity, another, who speaks as he reads, would scarcely less offend the hearer by the pedantic formality of his enunciation. In English, a distinction of this sort is not obligatory, but tolerated, and it is very commonly practised, though, among educated persons, not to such an extent as in some of the Continental languages. Thus, *don't* is very commonly used for *do not*, and, by careless speakers, even for *does not*; *I'll* and *you'll*, *I'd* and *you'd*, for *I will*, *you will*, *I would* and *you would*; *isn't*, *aren't*, *haven't*, and *won't*, for *is not*, *are not*, *have not*, and *will not*. Indeed, we too often hear, in the conversation of persons from whom we have a right to expect better things, such sad distortions of words as *haint* and *aint*, and I am sorry to say that Charles Lamb has even committed this last transgression in writing, in one of his familiar letters to Coleridge. So long as departures from grammatical propriety of speech are merely allowable colloquialisms, not recognized changes in the normal form of words, they come rather within the jurisdiction of social authority; they are questions of manner, like the set phrases of complimentary salutation, and not entitled to consideration as exemplifications of the law of progress and revolution to which all human language is subject. Such licenses of speech rest on no ascertainable principle. I shall, therefore, not inquire into their essential linguistic character, or the extent to which they may be indulged in without infringing the laws of good taste, and I will dismiss them with the simple remark that they are substantially corruptions of language, and therefore to be employed as sparingly as possible.

The changes of signification which words undergo, in all languages, from mere exhaustion by use, form a far more extensive and important subject. "Names and words," says Robertson, "soon lose their meaning. In the process of years and centuries, the meaning dies off them, like the sunlight from the hills. The hills are there, the color is gone." It is melancholy to reflect that such changes in the signification of words are almost always for the worse. A word unfamiliar and dignified in one century, becomes common and indifferent in the next, trivial and contempt-

ible in a third,* and this degradation of meaning is too often connected with a moral decline in the people, if it does not flow from it. "That decay in the meaning of words," observes the same admirable sermonizer whom I have just quoted, "that lowering of the standard of the ideas for which they stand, is a certain mark [of the decay of elevated national feeling]. The debasement of a language is a sure mark of the debasement of a nation; the insincerity of a language of the insincerity of a nation; for a time comes when words no longer stand for things; when names are given for the sake of a euphonious sound; and when titles are but the epithets of an unmeaning courtesy."

The thorough investigation of the principles of these changes would require more of psychological discussion, and a more abstruse vein of argument, than can fitly find place in a series of unmethodical and unscientific discourses, and I shall content myself with offering a couple of familiar illustrations, which may of themselves suggest important principles of language in its relation to ethics, without attempting to expound them. Let us take the adjective *respectable*. Respectable was originally—and in French, to the honor of that nation, still is—a term of high commendation, and was scarcely inferior in force, though not precisely equivalent in signification, to *admirable* in our present use of that word. At a later period it implied an inferior degree of worth, little above mediocrity, and now, with reference to intellect and morality, it has come to mean barely not contemptible, while, popularly, it is applied to every man whose pecuniary means raise him above the necessity of manual drudgery. Thus, in a celebrated criminal trial in England, when a witness was asked why he applied the epithet to a person of whom he had spoken as a "respectable man," he said it was because *he kept a horse and gig*.

* That a word does sometimes grow, instead of decline, in dignity, must be inferred from Gray's criticism of a line in Beattie's *Minstrel*: "The pomp of groves, the garniture of fields." Gray says of the whole stanza: "This is true poetry; it is inspiration; only there is one blemish; the word *garniture* suggesting an idea of *dress*, and, what is worse, of *French dress*." For some reason or other, perhaps from the very use made of it here by the poet, no such trivial association is now connected with this word.

Oh! sa che molte di queste odierno basecase un di non siano stelle. See Davanzati's *Letters*, pp. 17, 18, 19.

So the much abused term *gentleman*. This word originally meant, and still does in the French from which we borrowed it, not, as Webster supposes, a *gentle* or *genteel* man, but a man born of a noble family, or *gens*, as it was called in Latin. Persons of this rank usually possessed means to maintain an outward show of superior elegance, and leisure to cultivate the graces of social life, so that in general they were distinguished above the laboring classes by a more prepossessing exterior, greater refinement of manners, and a more tasteful dress. As their wealth and legal privileges diminished with the increasing power and affluence of the citizens of the trading towns, there was a gradual approximation, in both social position and civil rights, between the poorer gentlemen and the richer burgesses, until at last they were distinguished by nothing but family names, as indicative of higher or lower origin. The term *gentleman* was now applied, indiscriminately, to all persons who kept up the state and observed the social forms which had once been the exclusive characteristics of elevated rank. Theoretically, elegance of manner and attainment in the liberal arts should imply refinement of taste, generosity of spirit, nobleness of character, and these were regarded as the moral attributes specially belonging to those possessed of the outward tokens by which the rank was recognized. The advancement of democratic principles in England and America has made rapid progress in abolishing artificial distinctions of all sorts. Every man claims for himself, and popular society allows to him, the right of selecting his own position, and consequently in those countries every man of decent exterior and behavior assumes to be a gentleman in manners and in character, and in the ordinary language of life is both addressed and described as such.

It is much to the credit of England, that popular opinion in a remote age attached higher importance to the moral than to the material possessions of the gentleman, and accordingly we find that as early as the reign of Edward III., the word had already acquired the meaning we now give it, when we apply to it the best and highest sense of which it is susceptible. In Chaucer's *Romaunt of the Rose* there occurs a passage well illustrating this feeling, and it is worth remarking that the original *Roman de la Rose*, of which Chaucer's *Romaunt* is an admirable but improved

translation, contains no hint of the generous and noble sentiments expressed by the English poet, respecting the superiority of moral worth and the social virtues over ancestral rank.

But understand in thine entent
That this is not mine entendement,
To clepe no wight in no ages
Onely gentle for his linages ;
But who so is vertuous
And in his port not outrageous,
When such one thou seest thee beforene,
Though he be not gentle borne,
Thou maiest well saine this in soth
That he is gentle, because he doth
As longeth to a gentleman.

To villaine speech in no degree*
Let never thy lippe unbounden bee :
For I nought hold him, in good faith,
Curtels, that foule wordes saith ;
And all women serve and preise,
And to thy power hir honour reise,
And if that any mis-sayere
Despise women, that thou maist here,
Blame him, and bid him hold him still.

Maintaine thy selfe after thy rent,
Of robe and eke of garment,
For many sithe, faire clothing
A man amendeth in much thing.
Of shoone and bootes, new and faire,
Looke at the least you have a paire,
And that they sit so fetously,
That these rude may utterly
Marvaile, sith that they sit so plaine,
How they come on or off againe.
Weare streight gloves, with aumere
Of silke : and alway with good chere
Thou yeve, if thou have richesse,
And if thou have nought, spend the lesse.

The wanton abuse of words by writers in the department of popular imaginative literature has been productive of very serious

* Villano non è chi in villa stà
Ma villan' è chi villanie fà.

FLORIO, Giard. di Ricreat, 1591, p. 216.

To the same purpose is the English proverb : *Handsome is that handsome does.*

injury in language and in ethics. The light ironical tone of persiflage, in which certain eminent authors of this class habitually indulge, has debased our national speech, and proved more demoralizing in its tendency than the open attacks of some of them upon Christianity, its ministers, and its professors, or the fatuity with which others endow all their virtuous characters, and the vice, selfishness, and corruption which they ascribe to all their personages whom they do not make idiots. By such writers, a blackguardly boy is generally spoken of as a "promising young gentleman"; an abandoned villain or a successful swindler, as a "respectable personage"; a vulgar and ignorant woman, as a "graceful and accomplished lady." Had these authors contented themselves with pillorying the pet vulgarisms of the magazine and the newspaper, they would have rendered a great service to literature and to morals, but when the only words we possess to designate the personifications of honor, virtue, manhood, grace, generosity, and truth, are systematically applied to all that is contemptible and all that is corrupt, there is no little danger that these high qualities will, in popular estimation, share in the debasement to which their proper appellations are subjected. It is difficult to suppose that the authors of works evincing great knowledge of the world, who habitually profane the name of every attribute that men have held great and reverend, really believe in the existence of such attributes. A man who accustoms himself to speak of a low-minded and grovelling person as a gentleman, either has no just conception of the character which this word professes to describe, or does not believe in the possibility of it; and the admiring readers of such a writer will end by adopting his incredulity, and renouncing the effort to develop and cultivate qualities, which, in every virtuous community, have formed the highest objects of a noble social ambition.

LECTURE XII.

THE VOCABULARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

V.

THE advocates of the theory which regards language as wholly arbitrary, artificial, and conventional, as a thing of human invention, not of divine origin or of spontaneous growth, may find in its mutability a specious, though by no means a conclusive, argument in support of that doctrine. For things organic, products of the laws of nature, tend altogether to the repetition of their typical forms. If changed at all in sensible characteristics, the process of their transformation is extremely slow, and they exhibit a perpetual inclination to revert to the primitive type, as often as the disturbing or modifying influences are withdrawn, or even weakened in their action. Human contrivances, institutions, systems, on the contrary, are subject to incessant change, nor have they any inherent tendency to return to the original form, but as they recede from the starting-point, they continually diverge more and more widely from the initial direction. The physical characteristics of animal races, and of the spontaneous vegetable products of the soil, are constant, so long as they remain unmixed in descent, and subject to the same climatic and nutritive influences. But in the progress of centuries, man's laws, his institutions and modes of life, all, in short, that is essentially of his invention or voluntary adoption, and especially his language,* undergo such radical revolutions that little apparently remains to attest his relationship to his remote progenitors.

* One of the most important changes in any language historically known, is that by which English rid itself of grammatical gender, and was thus transferred to a new class not before known in European philology. This freedom from grammatical gender is now perhaps its most striking characteristic.

But the law of adherence and return to original type, if not confined to lower organisms, is greatly restricted in its application to more elevated races and forms. Man himself, the most exalted of earthly existences, seems almost wholly exempt from its operation, and the varieties of his external structure, once established, perpetuate themselves with little discoverable inclination to revert to any known common and primitive model of the species. Man's language is higher than himself, more spiritual, more ethereal, and still less subject than his physical frame to the jurisdiction of the laws of material nature. We have therefore no right to expect to find speech returning to primeval unity, until the realization of those dreams which predict the complete subjugation of material nature, the consequent equalization, or at least compensation, of her gifts to different portions of the earth's surface, the perfectibility of man, and his union in one great universal commonwealth. There are, however, well-ascertained facts which seem to show that words, with all their mutability, are still subject to a law of *reversion* like other products of material life, and if the distinction which many grammarians make between technically *modern* and *ancient* languages is well founded, and if the common tendencies ascribed to the former are inherent and not accidental, we must refer them to the operation of a principle as general and as imperative as that by which the double-flowers of our gardens are brought back to their original simplicity of structure, by neglect and self-propagation.* But it is as yet too early to pronounce upon the ultimate form of language, and we are hardly better able to foresee what centuries may bring forth in the character of speech, than to prophesy what configuration of surface and what forms of animal life will mark our earth in future geological periods. Modes of verbal modification, mutations of form, indeed, we can readily trace back so far as written memorials exist, and the course of change is sometimes so constant for a certain period, that we can predict, with some confidence, what phase a given living language will next present. These observations, however, respect more particularly the syntax, the inflections, the proportions of native and foreign roots, and other general characteristics of speech. Special changes of vo-

* See Lecture xvii.

cabulary can frequently be explained after they have once happened, but very seldom foretold, and words sometimes disappear altogether and are lost forever, or, like some stars, suddenly rise again to view, and resume their old place in both literature and the colloquial dialect, without any discoverable cause for either their occultation or their emergence. The only portion of the English vocabulary that can be said to be altogether stable consists of those Saxon words which describe the arts and modes of life common to all ages and countries, the specific names of natural products whose character is unchanging, and of their parts and members, and those also of the natural wants and universal passions of man. The nomenclature of the more refined arts and professions, and, in general, the alien words which have entered into the language of literature and polished society, are, on the other hand, subject, not indeed like native words to a law of development and growth, but to perpetual change, frequent rise and decay.

I alluded on a former occasion to the conservative influence of our great writers, and especially of the standard translation of the Bible. The dialect of that translation belongs to an earlier phase of the language, and it far more resembles the English of the century preceding than that of its own contemporary literature. Nevertheless, of the somewhat fewer than six thousand words it contains, scarcely two hundred are now in any sense obsolete or substantially altered in meaning, whereas most of the new or unfamiliar words which it sanctioned have fairly established themselves in our general vocabulary, in spite of the attacks which have been so often made and repeated against them. It would, however, not be fair to compare the language of the English Bible with the dialect of the present day by the individual words alone. The real difference is not wholly in single words, not even in the meaning of them separately considered, but also in combinations of words, phraseological expressions, idioms, or rather idiotisms. The translators of 1611 borrowed many of these from older versions, whose dialect was going out of use, and they now constitute the portion of the authorized Bible, which must be regarded as obsolescent. Take, for instance, the expression "much people." This was once grammatically correct, for the following reasons: *People* and *folk*, (as well as the Saxon

equivalent of the latter, *folc*.) in the singular form, usually meant, in Old-English, a political state, or an ethnologically related body of men, considered as a unit, in short a nation, and both people and folk took the plural form when used in a plural sense, just as nation now does. *Nation* is indeed found in the Wycliffite versions, but it rarely occurs, and *puple* or *folk* in the singular, *puplis* and *folkis* in the plural, are generally used where we now employ *nations*. In Tyndale's time, *nation* had come into more general use, while *people* was losing its older signification, and was seldom employed in a plural sense, still more rarely in a plural form. In the translation of 1611, I believe the plural is found but twice, both instances of its occurrence being in the Revelation. *Many* is essentially plural, and there is a syntactical solecism in applying it to a noun which itself does not admit of a plural. While therefore the word was hovering between the sense of nation, which may be multiplied, and that of an aggregation of persons, which may be divided, it was natural, and at the same time syntactically right, to say *much*, rather than *many*, people. King James's translators, in this as in many other points, employed the language of the preceding century, not of their own; for in the secular literature of their time *people* had settled down into its present signification, and conformed to modern grammatical usage.

An examination of the vocabulary of Shakespeare will show that out of the fifteen thousand words which compose it, not more than about five or six hundred have gone out of currency or changed their meaning, and of these, some, no doubt, are misprints, some, borrowed from obscure provincial dialects, and some, words for which there is no other authority, and which probably never were recognized as English.

In the poetical works of Milton, who employs about eight thousand words, there are not more than one hundred which are not as familiar at this day, as in that of the poet himself. In fact, scarcely any thing of Milton's poetic diction has become obsolete, except some un-English words and phrases of his own coinage, and which failed to gain admittance at all. On the other hand, the less celebrated authors of the same period, including Milton himself as a prose writer, employ, not hundreds, but thousands of words, utterly unknown to all save the few who occupy them-

selves with the study of the earlier literature of England. One might almost say that the little volume of Bacon's Essays alone contains as large a number of words and phrases no longer employed in our language, as the whole of Milton's poetical works.*

English, composed as it is of inharmonious and jarring elements, is, more than any other important tongue, exposed to perpetual change from the fermentation of its yet unassimilated ingredients, and it therefore has always needed, and still needs, more powerful securities and bulwarks against incessant revolution than other languages of less heterogeneous composition. The three great literary monuments, the English Bible, Shakespeare, and Milton, fixed the syntax of the sacred and the secular dialects in the forms which they had already taken, and perpetuated so much of the vocabulary as entered into their composition. It is true there are Continental authors of the seventeenth century, Pascal for instance, whose style and diction are as far from being antiquated as those of the English classics I have mentioned. Doubtless the great literary merits of Pascal, and the profound interest of the subjects he discusses, did much to give fixedness and stability to the dialect which serves as the vehicle of his keen satire and powerful reasoning, but we cannot ascribe to him so great a conservative influence as to the master-pieces of English literature, because, though French shares in the general causes of linguistic change which are common to all Christendom, it has not the same special tenden-

* Notwithstanding the multitude of new words and recent corruptions which we have engrafted upon the English tongue, I am inclined to believe that the general dialect of intelligent persons in this country is more archaic than that of the corresponding classes in England; and I ascribe this to the universal habit of reading, and especially to the familiarity of the Puritans with the English Scriptures. Certainly, no American editor of Bacon's Essays would think it necessary, or even respectful to the understanding of his readers, to inform them, as Archbishop Whately (at the suggestion of a friend) has done, that *vocation* means calling, state of life, and duties of the embraced profession; *diverse*, different; *poesy*, poetry; *contrarywise*, on the contrary; *whit*, the least degree, the smallest particle; *fume*, exhalation; *straightways*, immediately; *ere*, before; to *handle a subject*, to treat of, or discuss it; to *marvel*, to wonder at.

It would be easy to make out an interesting list of obsolete phrases, for the disuse of which it would be difficult to account. For instance, we still say, *catch a cold*, but no one in England or America would now say, *catch a heat*, though in the time of Holinshed the latter phrase was equally good English with the former.

cies to fluctuation as our more composite speech. Such, in fact, was the unstable character of English during the century which preceded Shakespeare, that, but for the influence of the Reformation and of the three great lodestars we have been considering, it would probably have become, before our time, rather Romance than Gothic in its vocabulary, as well as much less Saxon in its syntax.

The operation of the numerous causes which contribute to the introduction of new words into a given language, is generally sufficiently palpable. Wherever a new expression is suited to perform the office and take the place of an older one, the disappearance of the latter is easily accounted for. But there are numerous instances in the history of speech, where not single words only, but whole classes of them, suddenly drop out of the vocabulary and are heard no more. When an event of this sort is connected with changes in the processes by which particular ends are accomplished, the old words are commonly supplanted by new, so that the whole number is kept substantially good; but when, on the other hand, particular arts cease altogether to be practised, or pass out of the domestic circle, where the whole household more or less takes part in them, into the hands of large mechanical establishments, and become associate and organized, not individual occupations, their nomenclature perishes with them, or is restricted to the comparatively narrow circles which occupy themselves exclusively in their pursuit. As an example of one of these cases, that, namely, where the art and its vocabulary become obsolete together, I may mention the employment of archery, in war, in the chase, or as a healthful and agreeable recreation. If you look into Ascham's *Toxophilus*, published in Queen Elizabeth's time, or into any old English treatise on the Military Art, you will find numerous technical terms belonging to the use of the bow, which three hundred years ago were as familiar to every man and boy as lock, stock, and barrel are to us, but which have now completely vanished out of the common language of life, except the few of them that have been retained in proverbs and poetic similes. There were bows of a great variety of form and materials, and the manufacture of them was a very important trade by itself. The family names Bowyer and Archer, the latter from the French *arc*, a *bow*, are derived from the occupations of persons devoted

to the making or the use of that weapon.* The processes employed in the preparation of the wood by seasoning or otherwise, and in the shaping and decoration of the bow, were very numerous, and each had its appropriate name. The manufacture of arrows was a different trade. The arrow was as diversified in form and material as the bow, and the arrow-makers, or fletchers as they were called, from the French *flèche*, an *arrow*, (whence also the family name Fletcher,) had as full a vocabulary as the bowyers. Then came the manufacture of bow-strings, of bow-cases and quivers, of bracers for the protection of the left arm from the grazing of the string, of shooting-gloves, and other inferior branches of art belonging to the use of the bow, all distinct trades, and each with its distinct, separate stock of technical words. Now, as I have said before, almost the whole of this vocabulary is utterly gone out of our common speech, and the implement, to the construction and employment of which it belonged, having become disused altogether, no new words have arisen to take the place of those which have grown obsolete. Fire-arms, indeed, have introduced a totally different set of expressions, but the bow and the musket have so little in common, in form or use, that the word *aim* is almost the only one that could be applied to both. The technical expressions connected with the musket suggest quite other ideas than those belonging to the dialect of archery; and, therefore, the new phrases cannot be considered as the equivalents, or as occupying the place of the old. The construction of the musket is more difficult than that of the bow, and requires a longer apprenticeship, a much greater stock of tools and mechanical contrivances, and a larger capital for carrying it on; the demand for this weapon is much less, because one gun will outlast many bows, and for all these reasons, both the business of the gunsmith, which has become a manufacture, not a handicraft, and its terms of art, are less familiar to the people than were those of the bowyer and the fletcher. Although, therefore, the musket has brought with it many new words, and they are used in the main under the same circumstances as the dialect of archery, yet so far as the copiousness of popular English is concerned, the substitution of the one

* I find that historical evidence favors the derivation of Bowyer from the French *bouvier*.

weapon for the other has been attended not only with a great change, but with a considerable loss, in the daily speech of the numerous class which formerly drew the bow but now handle the musket.

Again, the improvements in fire-arms and their appurtenances, since their first introduction, have involved almost as great changes of nomenclature as those which followed their substitution for the bow. The forms and mode of employment of field and siege artillery have been almost completely revolutionized, and the technical terms belonging to them are wholly different from what they were three hundred years ago. The musket of the sixteenth century and the improved rifle of the nineteenth differ very widely in their details. In fact, they have little in common but their most general features, and the professional phraseologies of the hackbuteer of Queen Elizabeth's time, and the sharp-shooter of Queen Victoria's, resemble each other as little as their weapons.

A large class of words belonging to arts very familiar to the last generation in this country, but now no longer practised in domestic life, has become virtually obsolete within the memory of some who hear me. Let us take the vocabulary of American rural industry, and consider the changes which the advance of mechanical art, and the increased use of cotton, have produced within thirty or forty years in the household conversations upon the single subject of family clothing. At the period to which I refer, the wool and the flax, which formed the raw material of the common dress of the country, as well as of the tissues employed for numerous other purposes in domestic life, were produced upon the homestead. They not only underwent the several operations required to fit them for the dye-pot, the wheel, and the loom, but they were spun, woven, and often colored, beneath the family roof. Connected with all this industry there was an extensive nomenclature. First came the technicalities belonging to the growing of flax, including the preparation of the ground and the seed; then the sowing, harvesting, rotting, breaking, and swingling the plant. These were outdoor labors. Then followed the household toils, the hetchelling, spinning, reeling, spooling, weaving, and dyeing or bleaching of the cloth. Each of these processes had its appropriate mechanical implements, some of

them complicated in their construction, and every step of the whole succession of labors, every tool and machine, and each of its parts, had its appropriate name. The manufacture of wool, again, had its vocabulary, in some things coincident with, but in many different from, that employed with relation to flax; so that the supply of linen and woollen cloth for domestic purposes required the use of certainly not less than two or three hundred technical words, all of which were perfectly intelligible to every inhabitant of the country districts. The labors of which I speak extended through the whole year, and formed the most important of the industrial functions which the mistress of the family participated in and directed, and consequently were prominent and constant subjects of family conversation. Now, the every-day vocabulary of common colloquial life does not, at any one period, comprise more than three or four thousand words, and though some of the technical terms I have mentioned are still currently used in other applications, yet, for the most part, the nomenclature of this great branch of rural industry has perished with the industry itself. I think it safe to say, that the substitution of cotton for linen, and the supply of tissues by large manufacturing establishments instead of by domestic labor, have alone driven out of use seven or eight per cent. of the words which formed the staple of household conversation in the agricultural districts of the Northern States. Similar changes have taken place, though not so recently, in the domestic dialect of England, and indeed of the principal Continental countries. The domestic manufacture of cloths, linens especially, was by no means confined to the poor in a somewhat earlier stage of European society, and the words belonging to this branch of industry formed almost as conspicuous a part of the vocabulary of exalted, as of humble life. I may mention, as a proof of this, that in different languages the names of different implements employed in spinning have been adopted in very elevated applications, as designations of the female sex, which seems to have appropriated that art to itself in all times and countries. Thus, not to speak of the phraseology of more primitive ages, in modern Danish, the male and female lines of descent and inheritance, or as we say, the father's side and the mother's side, are called respectively the sword-side and the spinning or spindle-side; and in France, the Salic law, which excludes women from

the inheritance of the throne, is popularly expressed by the proverb that, "The crown does not descend to the distaff."*

The words that have thus perished have left no representatives behind them, for the time and thought once employed in these humble labors are now devoted to occupations in no wise connected with domestic manufactures, occupations which have brought a new and wholly unrelated stock of words with them. Music, books, monthly and weekly periodicals, journeys so much facilitated by the increase of railroads and steamboats, now fill up many hours formerly laboriously occupied with the cares of household life, and each of these has contributed its share of new words to enlarge and to enrich the sphere of thought, and the range of vocabulary belonging to the productive classes.

Translations from foreign literatures have introduced great numbers of Continental and new words into English. All nations have not only their proper tongues, but their characteristic ideas, thoughts, tastes, sensibilities, and the vocabulary adapted to the embodiment of these fails to find equivalents in the languages of other peoples. Hence a translator is not unfrequently obliged either to borrow the foreign word itself, or to frame, by composition or derivation, another more in accordance with native models, in order to express to his readers an intellectual conception, a taste or an antipathy, new not only to their speech, but to their mental and moral natures.

An incident which excites the surprise, or appeals to the sympathies, of a whole people will often give a very general and permanent currency to a new word, or an expression not before in familiar use. Take for example the word *coincidence*. The verb *coincide* and its derivative noun are of rather recent introduction into the language. They are not found in Minshew, and they occur neither in Shakespeare nor in Milton, though they may perhaps have been employed by scientific writers of as early a date. They belong to the language of mathematics, and were originally applied to points or lines. Thus, if one mathematical point be superposed upon another, or one straight line be super-

* *Spear-side* and *spindle-side* occur in the will of Alfred as designations of the male and female lines. *Spinster* is still used in English as a legal technical word.

posed upon another straight line between the same two points, or if two lines follow the same course, whatever be its curve, between two points, then, in the first case the two points, in the latter two, the two lines are said to *coincide*, and their conformity of position is called their *coincidence*. In like manner, any two events happening at the same period, or any two acts or states beginning at the same moment, and ending at the same moment, are said to *coincide* in time, and the conjugate noun, *coincidence*, is employed to express the fact that they are contemporaneous. These words soon passed into common use, in the same sense, and were applied also figuratively to identity of opinion or character in different individuals, as well as to many other cases of close similarity or resemblance, but they still belonged rather to the language of books and of science than to the daily speech of common life. On the Fourth of July, 1826, the semi-centennial jubilee of the declaration of American Independence, Thomas Jefferson, the author, and John Adams, one of the signers of that remarkable manifesto, both also ex-Presidents, died, and this concurrence in the decease of distinguished men on the anniversary of so critical an epoch in their lives and in the history of their country was noticed all over the world, but more especially in the United States, as an extraordinary *coincidence*. The death of Mr. Monroe, also an ex-President, on the Fourth of July a year or two after, gave a new impulse to the circulation of the word *coincidence*, and in this country, at least, it at once acquired, and still retains, a far more general currency than it had ever possessed before.*

The progress of natural science and the discussion of questions concerning vital propagation and growth, have had no inconsiderable influence on the language of the more intelligent among us. The theory of Darwin has not only familiarized us with the use of the word *evolution* in endless applications, but it has brought

* Words to which a sudden prominence is thus given are usually iterated and re-iterated usque ad nauseam. Thus, *element*, perhaps from its frequency, in alchemical books and conversation, or from its use in theological discussion in connection with the doctrine of the real presence, (*elements* of the Eucharist, a sense not noticed by Johnson,) had become so current, that the clown in Twelfth Night objects to it as too common.

"I will conster to them whence you come: who you are, and what you would, are out of my welkin: I might say *element*; but the word is over-worn."—Twelfth Night, Act III, sc. 1.

such terms as *homogeneity*, *heterogeneity*, etc., which were formerly almost entirely confined to the vocabulary of science, into very general currency. *Develop* and *development*, and the ideas they express, are now so common that it is hard to find a page of contemporaneous literature without them; and their frequent recurrence is one of the many proofs of the extent to which conceptions derived from physical science have entered into the general culture of our times. In a recent report of a committee upon the vegetables exhibited at the fair of an agricultural society, I observe the award of a premium to the grower of some "remarkably *well-developed* squashes."

The discussions at an important political assemblage, a few years since, gave a wide circulation, if not birth, to a new word, the convenience of which will secure it a permanent place in the language, and, at last, admission to the vocabulary of at least American literature. At the Baltimore convention of 1844, which nominated Mr. Polk for the Presidency, some excitement was produced by alleged attempts to control the action of the convention by persons not members of it, through irregular channels, and by irregular means. In the debate which arose on this subject, a prominent member energetically protested against all interference with the business of the meeting by *outsiders*. The word, if not absolutely new, was at least new to most of those who read the proceedings of that important convention, and it was now for the first time employed in a serious way. Its convenience seemed to strike the public mind at once, and as we have no other, and can have no better word than this genuine Saxon compound to express the idea it conveys, it will undoubtedly maintain itself in our vocabulary.

Probably most of the new words in any language grow out of the foreign relations of the country where it is spoken, because new objects and new conditions of society are more frequently of foreign than of strictly domestic origin. The early history of the English language is full of exemplifications of this principle, and many illustrations of its truth will be found in every treatise upon our native speech. Similar circumstances are producing like effects at the present day. The American word *immigrant*, for example, as opposed to *emigrant*, the one used with reference to the country *to* which, the other with reference to that *from* which

the migration takes place, is a valuable contribution of this sort to the English vocabulary. It did not originate in England, because, since the Conquest, there has never been any such influx of strangers into that country as to create a necessity for very specific designations of them; but the immense number of Europeans who have migrated to the United States has given that class of inhabitants a great importance, and very naturally suggested the expediency of coining a precise term, to express their relations to their new country, corresponding to that we already possessed as applicable to their relations to their native land. Doubtless *incomer* would have been a better word, but that was objectionable, because it could not have a conjugate of like formation, for *outcomer* would, in some of its uses, involve a contradiction, and besides, the noun *income*, to which *incomer* would regularly correspond, has a very different signification. Better still would it have been to revive the good old English *comeling*, which was used by Robert of Gloucester for the very same purpose as our *immigrant*, and often occurs in the Wycliffite translations where later versions have *stranger*.

From this same root we have another very expressive word, the boldness of whose form—a form that sets at defiance the ordinary rules of derivation—renders it still more appropriate as a designation of a class of independent thinkers, who pride themselves on their hostility to venerable shams and their disregard of hoary conventionalities. I mean the *comeouters*. This word has not, I believe, been yet received into polite literature, but nevertheless, repugnant as it is to the laws of English etymology, its thorough Saxon descent makes it more acceptable to both tongue and ear than such a word as *enlightenment*, which, as I have said before, though much wanted, has been hitherto resisted because of its mongrel aspect.

A list of the new words which have been presented for admission to our vocabulary,* including those which have failed of

* *Character*, though occurring many times in Shakespeare, does not appear to have been very readily or generally accepted, for Wotton, writing at least ten years after Shakespeare's death, says :

“Now here then will lie the whole business, to set down beforehand certain Signatures of Hopefulness, or *Characters* (as I will rather call them, because that Word hath gotten already some entertainment among us).” Wotton, *A Survey of Education*, p. 821, edition of 1651.

securing a reception, would be both curious and instructive, because it would show the deliberate judgment, or rather the instinctive sense, of the nation with respect to the principles which ought to govern the formation of native, and the naturalization of foreign, vocables. The tendency for a long time appears to have been to discourage domestic linguistic manufactures, and promote the importation of foreign wares. Here, as in public economy and finance, the free-trade party is in the ascendant, but in spite of the foreign influences to which the rapidly increasing intercourse, personal and commercial, between England and the European continent gives great weight, and in spite of the Latinizing tendencies of rhymed verse, to which I shall refer hereafter, there are unequivocal tokens of a reaction, and I have little doubt that the Saxon element will soon recover some of the ground it has abandoned in the last four or five centuries. Hitherto, however, not much has been done in the way of reviving lost or quiescent Saxon roots, and the fluctuations of the vocabulary have been chiefly confined to the Romance ingredient. Latin words, like strange guests, are constantly coming late and going early, while the native Saxons either steadily maintain their position, like old householders, or if they once fall into forgetfulness, remain long in a state of repose; but there is now a movement among the Seven Sleepers, and the future progress of our speech, it may be hoped, will bring back to us many a verbal Rip Van Winkle.

I have elsewhere spoken of what I have called the "suspended animation" of words, as one of the most singular phenomena of their history, and English philologists have collected numerous instances of this sort, chiefly from the Latin element of English, though there are not wanting like cases in proper Saxon words. The Saxon adjective *reckless* (formerly spelled *retchless*), for example, was in constant use down to the middle of the sixteenth century, but when Hooker, writing fifty years later, employed the word, it had become so nearly obsolete, that he, or perhaps his editor, thought it necessary to explain its meaning in a marginal note. It has now been revived, and is perfectly familiar to every English-speaking person.* A couple of like instances, though

* The indiscriminate use of *bound*, in the sense of ready, destined, determined, which has recently become very common in this country, and is per-

not in Saxon words, occur in a little vocabulary which went through at least twelve editions in the seventeenth century, but is now so completely forgotten as to be little known except to bibliographers. It is entitled, *The English Dictionarie, or an Interpreter of Hard English Words, Enabling as well Ladies and Gentlewomen, young Scholars, Clerks, Merchants, as also Strangers of any Nation to the understanding of the more difficult Authors already Printed in our Language—By Henry Cockeram, Gentleman.*

Among the "hard words" which make up Master Cockeram's list, are the verbs *abate* and *abandon*, both of which are marked as "now out of use, and only used of some ancient writers." Now, both these words occur in the English Bible, in Shakespeare and in Milton, and *abate*, as a term of art in law, could never have become obsolete in the dialect of that profession. They are now, and have long been, in very current use, both col-

haps peculiar to it, is an instance of the revival of an obsolete employment, if not an obsolete signification, of a word. In nautical language, indeed, as indicating the destination of a ship, it has been always in use, and is idiomatic and proper, but the present extension of its application is an offensive vulgarity, and is further objectionable, because it is a confounding of words which have no relation to each other. When we say a ship is *bound* to Cadiz, we are not employing the past participle of the verb *to bind*, but the Old-Northern participial adjective *búinn*, from the verb *at búa*, which signifies, among other things, to make ready or prepare. *Búinn* is of very frequent occurrence in Icelandic, and it is applied, without distinction, either to ships and their company, or to other objects and persons, as expressive of destination, or of purpose. It often corresponds to our familiar auxiliary, *going*, in such phrases as, I am *going* to do this or that. The Scandinavian inhabitants of the North of England introduced this word, and in the form *boun* or *boun* it has ever since remained in general use in the North-English and Scottish dialects; but in English proper, it has long been confined to the nautical vocabulary, though sometimes figuratively applied, in a strictly analogous sense, to persons. The modern corruption consists in employing it in a way that embraces the significations, both of the Old-Northern *búinn* and of the English participle *bound* from *bind*, and it is therefore a gross abuse of language. The nautical term *wind-bound* is literally *bound* or confined by adverse winds, and is not related to *bound* as denoting destination. The Anglo-Saxon had a verb *buan*, cognate with the Icelandic *at búa*, but I believe never used in this particular sense. The Icelandic participle *búinn* is also used as a sort of *past* auxiliary, much in the sense of the German adjective *fertig*; as, *ek er búinn at skrifa*, I have done writing, I have just written.

loquially and in literature, and the period during which they were not familiarly employed must have been a very short one.*

The introduction of a new word, native or foreign, often proves fatal to an old one previously employed in the same or an allied sense. *Income*, for instance, is of recent introduction, though Saxon in its elements and form, and it is generally applied to the pecuniary product of estates, offices or occupations, and even when used with respect to lands, its signification is confined to the money received for rent, or the net profit accruing from the sale of the crops. It corresponds very closely to the German *Einkommen* in etymology, structure, and signification, and is a good example of verbal affinity between a Teutonic dialect and our own, but we have purchased this convenient word by the sacrifice of another, equally expressive, though more restricted in use, and belonging to the Scandinavian side of English. I refer to *ofcome*, employed by old English writers in the sense of *produce* rather than of *product*, though sometimes synonymously with the more modern *income*. We still have the old word *outcome*, and use it much in its primitive sense, a *coming out*, a *consequence*, but the more modern *upshot* is now often substituted for it.

To persons who desire to watch the progress of change in English, periodical literature, and especially the daily journals, furnish the best opportunities for observation, and they are as

* *Ventilate* and *proclivity*, after having been half-forgotten, have come again into brisk circulation, and a comparison of the literature of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries will show multitudes of words common to the first and last of these periods, but which were little used in the second.

The most remarkable lists of such words as I am now speaking of are those referred to by Trench in the second chapter of his little volume on the authorized version of the New Testament. I will not quote these lists here, because throughout this course, I make it a point not to borrow from that very instructive and agreeable writer, and thereby diminish the pleasure which such of my hearers as are not already familiar with his works will find in their perusal. They are excellent exemplifications of the attractions and value of unpretending philological criticism, as distinguished from linguistic investigation; and I know no books on language better calculated to excite curiosity and stimulate inquiry into the proper meaning and use of the English tongue, than those interesting volumes, *The Study of Words*, *English Past and Present*, the *Lessons* contained in *Proverbs*, and the *essay on the English New Testament*, to which I have just alluded.

faithful in serving up the novelties of speech, as the political and commercial news of the day. The advertising columns, especially, often contain very odd specimens of both syntax and vocabulary, and one can scarcely run over a single sheet of a city newspaper without noting, among words which merit a place nowhere, some which, though excluded from dictionaries, ought long ago to have met acceptance.

In a small fragment of a New York daily paper, published within a month, I find these words and phrases, (nearly half of them in extracts from English journals,) not any one of which I believe any general English dictionary explains: *photoglyphic* engraving; *telegram*, for telegraphic message; an *out-and-out extreme clipper*; *prospecting* for gold; *go-ahead* people; they are not on *speaking terms*; enthusiastic Pacific *Stoppers* anticipate an annual product of a billion of gallons of wine in 1900; Mr. Gottschalk's *rendition* of a piece of music; the Black Swan is *concertizing* in the western States; the vessel leaked *so many strokes an hour*; an *emergent* meeting of a society—apparently in the sense of a meeting to consider an emergency; such a man ought to be *spotted* by his associates; old *fogy*, which by the way is an old English word; such a *handsomely-put-on man* as Mr. Dickens; and Kossuth's phrase, the *solidarity of the peoples*. Some of these expressions have little claim to be considered English, and they belong to the class of words which "come like shadows, so depart," but several of them long have been, and others will be, permanent members of the colloquial, if not of the literary, fraternity of the language. *Photoglyphic* and *telegram* are too recent in origin to be yet entitled to the rights of citizenship, but whatever may become of the former, *telegram* will maintain its place, for reasons of obvious convenience; and in spite of the objections of some Hellenists against it as an anomalous formation, the English ear is too familiar with Greek compounds of the same elements to find this word repugnant to our own principles of etymology.

LECTURE XIII.

INTERJECTIONS AND INTONATIONS.

IN a historical sketch of the genetic development of the parts of speech, we should naturally begin with the Interjection, both because it is the earliest of distinct human vocal sounds, and because it is a spontaneous voice prompted by nature, and not, like other words, learned by imitation, or taught by formal instruction. This is at least the character of the true interjection, though the want of a specific term, and the inconvenience which would result from a too copious and minute grammatical nomenclature, oblige us to include under the same appellation words, and even entire phrases, whose resemblance to that part of speech lies chiefly in being, like it, introduced into a period with which they are not syntactically connected.

Of the elements of discourse, there is no one which has received so little attention from grammarians as the part of speech in question. Few treatises on language devote more than a page or two to the subject, and many writers have denied to interjections the character of words altogether. I think that, with most grammarians, this is a prejudice arising from the fact, that these words seem to have no appropriate place in so artificial a system as that of the Latin grammar, from which we have derived most of our ideas of the structure of language. They can neither be declined nor conjugated; they are incapable of degrees of comparison; they govern nothing, qualify nothing, connect nothing, and may be left out of the period altogether without affecting the syntactical propriety of its structure. In short, they cannot be parsed. They have no position in the rank and file of the legion, and therefore are at best supernumeraries, if not intruders. In a language so cemented and compacted together as the Latin, not by mortar or pins of independent material and formation, but by organic attachments, natural hooks and eyes, congenital with the words and

of one substance with them, this objection to the recognition of constituents so incapable of assimilation is by no means without validity; but in English, and in those other tongues where the relations between important words are determined by mere position or by the aid of distinct and insignificant particles, it strikes us much less forcibly. I shall endeavor to vindicate the claim of these neglected articulations to rank as legitimate means of vocally expressing human passions, states, affections, and therefore to be called words, though of a rhetorical and dramatic, not of a logical or didactic character.

Considered as a purely natural and spontaneous emission of the voice, we might expect to find similar interjections in all human tongues, but their forms, even when they most resemble each other, are modified by the same obscure influences which diversify the action of the organs of speech in the production of like or analogous sounds among different nations, and consequently they are by no means identical in different languages. The alleged diversity in the cries of the infant and in the true interjections—which utterances, psychologically considered, belong to the same general class of expressive sounds—has been urged by some physiologists as a proof of a diversity of origin in the human race. But the argument loses something of its weight when it is shown, as it may be, that in numerous other cases, words common to two or more demonstrably cognate nations, and identical in form, and even in sound so far as any written notation can express sound, are nevertheless differenced in their pronunciation by those nations, as widely as the true interjections are by unrelated races. These distinctions are occasioned by two proximate causes; the one is the employment of different sets of muscles, by different peoples, for the production of the same or similar sounds, the other is the peculiar quality impressed upon articulate sounds by the intonation with which they are uttered.

These two classes of linguistic facts, the production, namely, of like or analogous sounds in different languages by the employment of different organs, or at least muscles, and the fixed character of national intonation in certain languages, have as yet been little investigated by philologists, but they are full of curious interest, and the study of them, however difficult, is essential to the construction of even a tolerably complete system of phonology.

Nice distinctions between related sounds depend of course upon the mechanical means employed to produce them, and one reason why an adult so seldom succeeds in mastering the pronunciation of a foreign language, why he is at once recognized as a stranger by his articulation even of words which, according to grammars and dictionaries, are identical with syllables and words of his mother-tongue, is, that to pronounce them like a native, he must call into play muscles not employed, or employed in a different way, in speaking his own language, and which have become so rigid from disuse, that he cannot acquire the command of them, or, in other words, render them what are called voluntary muscles. Further, the organs of speech act and react upon each other; the frequent play of a given set of muscles modifies the action of neighboring or related muscles; there is, to use a word, which, if not now English, soon will be, a certain *solidarity* between them all, and organs accustomed to the deep gutturals of the Arabic, the hissing and lisping sounds of the English, or the nasals of the French and Portuguese, are with difficulty trained to the pure articulation of languages like the Italian, in which such elements do not exist.

National peculiarities of intonation are still more subtle and obscure, and they are almost equally difficult to seize by the ear, and to reproduce by the lips and tongue.* To us, whose intonations belong not to the individual word, but to the whole period, it is difficult to conceive of the tone with which a word is uttered, as a constant, essential, characteristic, and expressive ingredient of the word itself. But in monosyllabic languages like the Chinese, where the number of words, differing in the vowel and consonantal elements of which they are composed, must necessarily be

* An interesting instance of the capacity of young children for appreciating and repeating such intonations, was given me by an intelligent American mother, who had been residing for a short time in Genoa. She had two or three boys, somewhere from three to six years of age, and shortly after her arrival in Genoa, and too soon for the children to have learned the native dialect, she heard them, as they were playing on the side-walk in front of her apartment, talking together in what appeared to her *Genoese*. On going to them and listening attentively, she found they were not *speaking* at all, but merely uttering a rapid succession of unmeaning vocables closely resembling in sound the actual words they were daily hearing, while at the same time they perfectly imitated the peculiar *sing-song* which characterizes the Genoese dialect.

very small, other distinctions must be resorted to, and accordingly we find that in such languages a monosyllable, consisting perhaps of one vowel and one or two consonantal elements, and which admits of but one mode of spelling in alphabetic characters, may nevertheless have a great number of meanings, each indicated by a peculiarity of intonation not perhaps appreciable by foreign ears, but nevertheless readily recognizable by a native. These peculiarities are, however, by no means confined to languages so alien to our own, for they exist in the Danish and the Swedish, both of which are nearly allied to English, and they, no doubt, occur to a considerable, but thus far uninvestigated, extent, in other tongues more familiar to most of us. In such languages, these intonations are constant, and they are also expressive and significant, so far that certain words are under all circumstances pronounced with the same intonation, and thus distinguished from words differing from them in signification, but otherwise identical in sound. Scandinavian phonologists have made these intonations, for which the vocabulary of our language does not even furnish names, a subject of special inquiry; and Rask, one of the most eminent of modern philologists, has subtilized so far upon them, that few of his own countrymen, even, have sufficient acuteness of ear to follow him. But this is not strange, when we learn that the same discriminating phonologist fancied he could detect, what no Englishman or American ever did, a difference between the pronunciation of our two English words *pale*, pallid, and *pail*, a water-bucket.* An Englishman or an American *may* make a difference between *pail* and *pale*, but it is an accidental difference arising from the context; as, for instance, when we speak of 'a *pale*, sickly girl,' or, on the other hand, when we say, 'Mrs. A——'s dress was *pale* yellow.' Here the two words may be pronounced with a difference of intonation; whereas in, 'I sent my Irish housemaid for a *pail* of water,' is hardly susceptible of such variation.

Yet more ethereal than even these subtle shades of difference, is what, to borrow a musical term, may be called the *mode* in which a given language is spoken. A stranger in Greece or the East is struck at once by a certain sadness of tone, amounting at times almost to wailing, which marks the speech of the people,

* Rask's Danish Grammar for the use of Englishmen.

and especially of the women of the lower classes. Some travellers have ascribed this to the long centuries of humiliation and oppression under which women have groaned in the East; but I think it belongs rather to the races than to the sex; for it is not altogether confined to the women: and, besides, something of the same sort is found among the most primitive and simple tribes, and the fact, if it is a fact, that the music of ancient Greece and Latium, like that of most Oriental countries, was wholly in the minor mode, seems to confirm this view.

The Greek, or to speak more specifically, Alexandrian and other colonial grammarians, carefully investigated the intonation of their language, in both its branches, accentuation and vocal inflection, and they invented several points, which we call accents, to indicate the particular intonation of the important syllables of the words. What the signification of these points was we do not know; nor does the pronunciation of the modern Greeks afford us any light on the subject. What we call accent, that is, stress of voice, has been generally supposed to have been, among other things, marked by them; but this is disputed. Metrical quantity or prosody, they certainly did not indicate, but left it to general rules, which, in most cases, were sufficiently explicit. The quantity, or relative duration of syllables as it is generally understood, is a quality of sound to which the Greek ear was acutely sensible, and it appears to have been recognized in the earlier Teutonic dialects; but to modern ears, it is, as an element of prosody, much less appreciable. In English verse, and more especially by recent poets, rhythm has been made to depend upon and consist in accentuation alone, and those other elements of articulation, which to the ancient classical nations constituted the very essence of poetical melody, are, by the fashion of the day, altogether disregarded. This, I think, is a mistake, but it will be more fitly considered on another occasion.

But, to return from what may be considered a digression, the true interjections, though modified by peculiarities of intonation, have at least a family resemblance, if not an absolute identity in most known languages. They are, for the greater part, monosyllabic, and frequently consist of a vowel preceded or followed by an aspirate or an aspirated guttural only, though they are not always of so simple a structure. Some linguists distinguish be-

tween interjections which are bare indications of mental or physical pain or pleasure, and those which are expressive of sensuous impressions derived from external objects through the organs of sight and hearing; but for our present purpose it is not essential to inquire how far this classification is well founded. The claim of interjections of the purely involuntary character to be classed among what grammarians call the parts of speech, has been disputed, as I have already remarked, on the ground of their alleged want of a truly articulate character, and especially of all etymological and syntactical connection with the periods of discourse. It is for this reason that the name of *interjection*, from the Latin *interjicio*, I throw in, has been applied to them, as something casually dropped into the sentence, but not logically belonging to it, or having any grammatical relations with it. It is said that such interjections belong to speech, only in that figurative sense in which all the means whereby external facts are made known to us are comprised within the term language, and they are assimilated to those inarticulate cries which constitute the language of the lower animals. They are generally spontaneous, involuntary exclamations, and they express, in a vague and indeterminate way, the simple fact that the utterer is painfully or pleasurably affected, without in themselves giving any indication of the cause, or even always of the specific character, of the emotion or sensation. The interjection has, however, one important peculiarity, which not only vindicates its claim to be regarded as a constituent of language, but entitles it unequivocally to a high rank among the elements of discourse. It is in itself expressive and significant, though indeed in a low degree, whereas at least in uninflected languages like the English, other words, detached from their grammatical connections, are meaningless, and become intelligible only as members of a period. If I utter an interjectional exclamation denoting pain, joy, sorrow, surprise, or anger, every person who hears me understands at once that I am agitated by the corresponding affection. Here, then, a fact is communicated by a single syllable, and the interjection may be regarded as the hieroglyphical or symbolical expression of a whole period. But, on the other hand, if I pronounce the word *house*, or *run*, or *red*, or *ten*, without other words, and without accompanying gestures or other explanatory circumstances, I tell the

listener nothing, though the word may, indeed, from accident or from some obscure chain of association, excite in his mind an image of the object, or an intellectual conception of the act, or accident, or number, denoted by the word I use. He may, in short, *suppose* a subject, an object, a copula, or whatever predicate is necessary to complete the period, and thus arbitrarily or conjecturally supply the ellipsis. This, in fact, from the habit of individualizing the general, and making concrete the abstract, he can hardly fail to do, but nevertheless, in the absence of explanatory circumstances, this mental operation of the auditor neither logically results from, nor is warranted by, the force of the word I have uttered, which of itself communicates no fact, authorizes no inference. And herein lies the great miracle of speech, the strongest proof of its living, organic—I had almost said divine—power, that even as the processes of vegetable life build up, assimilate, vivify, and transform into self-sustaining, growing, and fruitful forms the dead material of mechanical nature, so language, by the mere collocation and ordonnance of inexpressive articulate sounds, can inform them with the spiritual philosophy of the Pauline epistles, the living thunder of a Demosthenes, or the material picturesqueness of Russell's Letters in the Times.

The interjections hitherto described are distinguished from the other parts of speech, not only by their inherent and independent expressiveness, (a point in which they have a certain analogy with words imitative of natural sounds, and therefore significant of them,) but by the fact that they are subjectively connected with the passion or sensation they denote, and are not so much the enunciation or utterance of the emotion, as symptoms and evidences of it; in fact, a mode of thinking aloud. In the other articulate forms of communication by which we make known our mental or bodily state, that state becomes objective, and therefore those forms are descriptive, not expressive. Accordingly, the interjection may be said to be the appropriate language, the mother-tongue of passion; and hence much of the effect of good acting depends on the proper introduction and right articulation of this element of speech. It is related of Whitfield, that his interjections, his reduplicative Ah! of pity for the unrepentant sinner, his diphthongal Oh! of encouragement and persuasion for the almost converted listener, formed one of the great excellences of

his oratory, and constituted a most effective engine in his pulpit artillery.

There is a species of interjection not usually distinguished by English grammarians from other words of that class, but which some German writers expressively call *Lautgeberden*, or vocal-gestures. These approach much more nearly to the character of other words than those of which we have hitherto spoken. The spontaneous interjections constitute a kind of self-communion, and though conveying information of a certain sort to others, they are not uttered with any such conscious purpose. The *Lautgeberde*, on the other hand, is not a mere involuntary expression of sensation or emotion, but is addressed to other persons or creatures, and usually indicates a desire or command, so that it corresponds to the imperative of verbs in complete periods. Among these *Lautgeberden*, are all the isolated, monosyllabic or longer words, by which we invite or repel the approach, and check or encourage the efforts of others; in short, all single detached articulations, intended to influence the action, or call the attention, of others, but not syntactically connected with a period. Analogous to these are certain passionate expressions, sometimes forming whole periods, but more commonly abridged, and used interjectionally. They are sometimes reduced to a single word, sometimes composed of several, but usually without any grammatical connection with what precedes or follows them. In this class are embraced most familiar optative and deprecatory forms of expression, and especially the invocation of blessings and denunciation of curses. *Farewell, welcome, goodbye*, (originally distinct periods, but not interjectional,) *Heaven forbid*, and other similar ejaculations, are of this character. The Greek, especially in passionate declamation, is full of such phrases. Those familiar with Demosthenes will remember a striking instance in the Fourth Philippic, where, in an interjectional form, he invokes the vengeance of the gods on Philip of Macedon. This is a peculiarly interesting example, because it is one of the few where a syntactical relation exists between the ejaculation and the period into which it is introduced; for the execration, *οἴπερ αὐτὸν ἐξολέσειαν!* begins with a relative pronoun, which grammatically connects it with the preceding denunciation of Philip, as an enemy to Athens and her gods.

It is affirmed that in the Euscara or Basque, the interjections are regularly declinable,* and it would hence appear that their want of syntactical character in the Indo-European languages is not an essential feature of this part of speech.

Allied in form and nature to the true interjection, but wholly distinct from the constant intonations belonging to particular words in certain languages, to which I have already alluded, are the modulations of the voice in articulate speech, which, as constituting a characteristic difference between the breathing, spoken word, and its silent written representative, between the subjective and the objective elements of language, between living action and historical narration, are among the most powerful instrumentalities whereby man acts on the moral nature of his fellow-man.† The unstudied accents of young children are prompted by nature. They are more truly spontaneous, and not less expressive, than the notes of the forest song-bird, and they are the most touching and persuasive of human utterances. But with the sincerity and frankness of lisping childhood, passes away the truthfulness of its tones. Dissimulation, hypocrisy, and the thousand forms of social falsehood, almost extirpate the heaven-born faculty of significant modulation, and the voice soon becomes as artificial as the gait, the gestures, and the other outward habits of the man. Affectation, the desire of seeming to be that which we are not, is the besetting sin of men. As a plain, simple, unaffected manner in speech, in gesture, in carriage, is one of the most attractive of external qualities, so it is one of the most difficult of acquirements; for in all grades of society, from the wigwam to the palace, the most natural thing in the world is to be unnatural.

* In the more familiar European languages we find many examples of variation of form in words usually classed among the *indeclinables*. Thus in Mediæval Italian *conciòsiacosache* and *conciòfossecosachs* are respectively present and past forms of a compound, or rather aggregate, conjunction, signifying *although*; and it is a curious peculiarity of Portuguese that the infinitive, when preceded by a preposition, is regularly inflected for number and person. Thus, *Ver*, *to see*, if used with a *plural*, becomes *Vermos*, *Verdes*, and *Verem* when the subject is of the first, second, or third person plural. So, in the *Lusiad*, Camoens had: *para verem trabalhos excessivos*—*that they may experience severe trials*.

† Fuller, in his *Holy State*, p. 90, says of Mr. Perkins: "He would pronounce the word *Damnè* with such an emphasis as left a dolefull echo in his auditors' ears a good while after."

But besides this half-voluntary distortion of our natural faculty of speech, the injudicious methods by which reading is taught do very much to fix, as well as to originate, a formal, monotonous, and unnatural intonation. The habit of mechanical inexpressive delivery, once contracted, is almost incurable; and it is a trite observation that so simple a thing as a clear, appropriate, and properly intoned and emphasized pronunciation, in reading aloud, is one of the rarest as well as most desirable of social accomplishments. Few persons are able, when the eye is fixed upon a printed or written page, or even in reciting what they have learned by heart, to modulate the voice, as they would do in the unpremeditated conversational utterance of their own thoughts in the same words; and the difference between our modes of reading and speaking is not confined to the modulation of the period, but extends itself to single words, so that it is extremely common, especially among persons not much practised in reading aloud, to use one system of orthoepy in conversation, and quite another in reading. But the evil habits we contract in our school exercises are productive of further mischief. They are highly injurious to the physical organs of speech. And this is one reason why clergymen, who, in the religious services of most sects, read much aloud, are so much more frequently annoyed with bronchial affections, than lawyers and political orators, who use the voice much more, and with louder and more impassioned articulation, but who for the most part speak extemporaneously, and with a more natural delivery.

As has been already observed, the classes of words and of vocal modulations which we have been considering belong to, if they do not constitute, the language of passion, and therefore it is, as we have already hinted, equally a rule of morality and good taste to practise great caution and circumspection in the employment of them.

What are called *expletives* in rhetorical treatises are grammatically allied to the interjections, though widely different from them by the want of meaning, while the interjection is always expressive. I can hardly agree with Webster in his definition of the expletive, and still less in the statement with which he concludes it. "The expletive," says Webster, "is a word or syllable not necessary to the sense, but inserted to fill a vacancy or for orna-

ment. The Greek language abounds with expletives." So far as the word answers no other purpose than to "fill a vacancy," it is properly expletive, but if it be appropriate and graceful enough to deserve the name of an "ornament," it is not superfluous, and therefore is not an expletive. In most cases, indeed, the vacancy filled by words of this class is not merely a defect of continuity in the syntax, but it indicates a positive want of thought, and ignorant and illogical persons are naturally very prone to interlard their discourse with these fragmentary expressions. The frequent use of interjections, expletives, and vague or unmeaning phrases of all kinds, is therefore inadmissible in a really elegant and graceful conversational style;* and though I hope the caution is superfluous, I should not do justice to my subject, were I to omit to express my full concurrence in the condemnation which, for intellectual as well as social and moral reasons alike, persons of culture award to the employment of profane language,—a vice eminently ungraceful in itself, and vulgarizing in its influence. "Othes," says King James, "are but a use, and a sinne clothed with no delight nor gaine, and therefore the more inexcusable in the sight of men."

The remark with which Webster accompanies his definition of the word expletive, namely, that the Greek language abounds in such, is in my opinion as erroneous as the definition is defective. The Greeks, like the modern Italians, were an exceedingly excitable and impressible people, and like them, they used a great number of interjections. We certainly are far from being able to discover the precise force of these; still less can we find equivalents for them in a language which, like ours, is spoken by a graver and more reserved people, and therefore possesses fewer words of this class; but with regard to the numerous particles and other words which Webster apparently classes among expletives, we are not authorized to infer that they were superfluous to the sense of the passages where they occur, barely because we

* I believe our English cousins more frequently offend against this rule of good taste than do we Americans. I know many even of the higher classes who rarely utter the simplest sentence without *interjecting* at least one *don't you know*, or *you know*. I have known an eloquent Vaudois pastor, who often astonished me by strengthening his affirmations with an adjuration of the god of wine—*per Bacco!*

do not see the necessity of them. The supposition is contrary to all we know of the habits of the Greek mind, and it is much safer to presume that they had a meaning and a force, which our imperfect knowledge of the niceties of the language forbids us to appreciate, than to believe that Plato, and Aristotle, and Xenophon thought so inconsecutively as to be obliged to fill the interstices of their mental structures with insignificant rubbish.

In commencing the study of foreign languages, we meet with many words, to which dictionaries assign no distinct meaning, and which appear superfluous to the sense of the period, and therefore to be expletives. But further study generally shows us that they, however difficult to define in themselves, have, nevertheless, an important influence on the sense of the period, by strengthening, moderating, or otherwise qualifying, the signification of leading words. The German, as well as the Greek, is rich in these particles, and the existence of German as a living speech enables foreigners to acquire a much clearer comprehension of these, at first sight insignificant, elements than is possible in the case of a language, which, like the Greek, survives only as a written tongue.

The Greek and Latin languages are remarkably distinguished from each other in the number and the character of the interjections; and it will in general be found that the use and signification of the interjections employed in any language furnish a very tolerable key to the character of the people who speak it. The modern Italians have inherited from their Roman ancestors a great number of elliptical passionate phrases, which are employed in this way, and the frequent introduction of the names of the heathen deities, together with those of the Virgin Mary and the saints in their ejaculatory exclamations, produces a ludicrous effect upon a stranger. One of these has even found its way into German and English. In the comedies and other light literature of both, in the last century, it is of frequent occurrence, and if we can judge from them, it was very current in fashionable society, though probably few of the fine ladies, who so often exclaimed, *O, gemini!* (*jiminy* or *jemini*,) knew that the phrase was a Latin invocation of the divine brothers, *Castor and Pollux*.*

* The Italian *diamine!* is a different word, in *diaboli nomine!*

LECTURE XIV.

THE NOUN, ADJECTIVE, AND VERB.

It is not disputed, that in the genesis of language the interjection, even if not technically a part of speech, and the onomatopoeic or imitative words, must be regarded as the primary linguistic utterances; but grammatical physiologists differ much with respect to the order of succession in the other principal parts of speech. Presented in the usual form of a historical problem, the inquiry is an idle one, for the noun, whether substantive or adjective, and the verb, can be conceived of as existing only as members of a period or proposition, and therefore the noun supposes the verb, and the verb the noun. With the exception of the *Lautgeberden*, or vocal-gestures, and the imitative sounds, words are as essentially and necessarily social as man himself, and a single word can no more spring into spontaneous life, or exist in isolation, than can the intelligent being who uses it. We know external objects only by their sensuous properties and their action, and we must necessarily suppose all names of objects to have been primarily descriptive, because we can imagine no possible ground of a *name*, but the ascription of a quality or an act as characteristic of the object named. It would seem, then, that before the name could be applied, the adjective or the verb expressive of the quality or act, the predicate, in short, must exist; and on the other hand, as concrete ideas must precede abstract ones, we cannot comprehend the origin of the adjective or the verb, independently of the noun, or name of some object possessing the quality, or habitually practising the act, predicated by the adjective or verb. But though words have no separate individual existence, though they live and move only in interdependence upon each other, yet in studying their forms and organization, each must be primarily investigated by itself, because the limited nature of our faculties, whether sensuous or intellectual, obliges us to ac-

quire the knowledge of the whole by the successive study of its parts, of the complex, through an acquaintance with the simple elements of which it is conceived to be composed.

In order to comprehend the physiology of a given language, or the functions and relations of its organs, a knowledge of its anatomy, or the normal structure of these organs, is necessary, and we will therefore examine briefly the formal characteristics of English words. These we have already considered in their bearing upon etymology, and though we are now to look at them from a different point of view, the facts are still the same, and I must accordingly be pardoned for some repetition of what, indeed, I by no means suppose to have been new when I first presented it. I do not propose in the present course to attempt a formal examination of every class of vocables into which grammarians have divided language, and I shall only discuss the character and offices of the noun or substantive, the adjective and the verb. I begin with the noun or substantive, not as historically first, or logically pre-eminent, but because, in learning words by the process of domestic instruction called the natural method, we commence with *names*.

Before proceeding further, it will not be amiss to suggest an observation or two upon the names which grammarians have given to these parts of speech. The word *noun* is derived from the Latin *nomen*, a name, and is a very appropriate designation for the substantive, which is properly the *name* of an object. English grammarians generally include under the *noun* the *adjective*, and speak of nouns substantive and nouns adjective. The ground of this nomenclature is the theory, that the adjective is to be regarded as the name of an accident or quality existing not independently or abstractly, but only in the concrete, and that the term which designates an accident is not properly entitled to a separate grammatical position, but must be considered as a mere appendage or adjunct of the substantive. But this view is without any solid foundation. The verb is as truly the *name* of the act or status it represents, as the adjective of the quality it expresses, and there would be the same propriety in styling the former the noun *verbal*, as the latter the noun *adjective*. The designations *noun substantive* and *noun adjective*, even if logically accurate, are moreover objectionable for grammatical purposes,

as being awkward and unwieldy. I therefore discard them, and though I may occasionally employ *substantive*, to vary the phrase, yet I shall generally use *noun* as equivalent to noun substantive, and not as embracing the adjective, which I consider as included in it only by a misnomer.

The Roman grammarians applied to the member of the proposition which predicates of a subject *being, state, volition, action* or *perception*, the name of *verbum*, or the *word*, as emphatically the most important vocable in the period, or as the *word* which asserts, and in a sense embodies the proposition; and the term *verb*, commonly employed in most European languages, like other technical words of modern grammar, is derived from the Latin appellation. German philologists, however, commonly style the verb *Zeitwort*, time-word, because the verb, by its form or by the aid of auxiliaries, generally expresses the period of the act or status described, as past, present, or future, and of course involves the notion of time. But this nomenclature appears to me highly objectionable. Whenever we describe or name an object by a quality either unessential, or relatively unimportant, to our conception of its true character, we utter a philological untruth, and proclaim a philosophical error. We can as easily abstract the notion of an act or a condition from time, as we can that of color, or any other sensuous quality. We can as well imagine the act of running, or striking, without any reference to the period when the act takes place, as we can the property of redness, of weight, of sourness, or sweetness, and therefore, although the variable forms of verbs usually express time, yet to the primary notion conveyed by the verb, time is as unessential as it is to our conception of the taste of an orange. We may go further, and affirm that in strictness all verbs express present time, when they refer to time at all. In the process of ratiocination, we think by general terms alone, without reference to time, but it is certain that when we individualize an act or state, the image which it suggests is necessarily a present one. *I have done*, and like forms, were originally present or aorist, as for example, *I have deposited ten pounds with the Barings* meant *I have, in deposit with the Barings, ten pounds*; but, as in order to have it in deposit, a previous act of deposition was necessary, the past sense was gradually attributed to the phrase. Whether

I say, "Mr. Church painted his Heart of the Andes last year," or "Mr. Church will paint the Jungfrau next year," the picture and the painter are not past or future to my imagination, but present; and therefore the verb I use excites, in both my mind and that of my hearer, a notion of a present artist and a present act. The imagination lives in a perpetual *now*. The notion of an individual event as having been or as yet to be, is a purely logical conception, and only general propositions which exist in words alone, only that which we cannot picture to ourselves, that which has no specific reality and is only a mere intellectual figment, can be detached from the notion of present time at all. In most languages, verbs have forms which exclude the notion of time, as, for example, the infinitive as used in modern English; and even the forms grammatically expressive of time are, in general propositions, employed aoristically, or without any reference to time. For example, when I say, "birds fly," I do not affirm that birds are *now* flying, that they actually *did* fly, or *will* fly, at any past or future point of time, but simply that the power of flight is at all times an attribute of the bird. The present tense of the verb to *fly*, as thus used, is as absolutely independent of time as the noun bird, or the adjective red, by which I may qualify it. If the expression of time is an inherent necessity of the verb, special forms for the future as well as the present and the past ought to be universal, but in most modern European languages, the future is a compound, the elements of which are a *present* auxiliary and an *aorist* infinitive, for in the phrases I *shall* go, he *will* go, *shall* and *will* are in the present tense, and *go* is aoristic. The Anglo-Saxon, with a single exception in the case of a substantive verb, had absolutely no mode of expressing the future by any verbal form, simple or compound. The context alone determined the time, and in German, in the Scandinavian dialects, and in English, as also in Italian and in the other modern Latin tongues, the future is very commonly expressed, as it is in Anglo-Saxon, by a present. Ich gehe morgen nach Philadelphia, *I go*, or *I am going*, to Philadelphia to-morrow, are more frequently used by Germans and Englishmen than ich werde gehen, *I shall or will go*; and the adverbial nouns morgen and to-morrow, not the verbs gehen and go, are the true *time-words*. The use of the present for the past, too, especially in spirited narrative and in poetry,

is not less familiar, and in both these cases the expression of time belongs to the grammatical period, not to the verb.

The missionary Bowen, whose grammar and dictionary of the Yoruba language are about to be published by the Smithsonian Institution, informs us that in that tongue the verbs have no inflections whatever for mood, tense, number, or person, and that all logical and grammatical relations of the verb are expressed by particles and auxiliaries. To call the verb the *time-word* is therefore to name it by an accident, not by an essential characteristic; by an occasional, not a universal property. In fact, nearly the whole modern German scientific terminology is objectionable for similar reasons, and, as I have before attempted to show, also on higher philosophical grounds. The simple word *verb* is preferable to any other designation, not because, when we study its etymology, we find it truly descriptive, as indicating the relative importance of this word in the period, but precisely for the opposite reason, namely, that to English ears it is not descriptive at all, but purely arbitrary, and therefore is susceptible of exact definition, and not by its very form suggestive of incongruous images or mistaken theory.

The simplest, and for the purposes of the present course, the best definition of the *noun* is that it is the name of a person, place, or thing, of that, in short, which may be an object of thought, whether as a sensuous perception or as an intellectual conception, or in other words, that which may be the subject of a proposition.

Grammarians and logicians divide nouns into a great number of classes, but we shall find it sufficient for our object to regard only the most general division, which is that into *proper nouns*, or names of individual persons, places, or things, as Cicero, New York, Great Eastern; and *common nouns*, which are applied to whole species, genera, classes, as man, city, ship.

The resemblance between the noun, as an English part of speech, and the noun of other languages, is closer than that between the verb or even the adjective and their foreign representatives. Our noun has usually the distinction of number, one inflection of case (the genitive or possessive) and sometimes even gender; so that all the formal characteristics of this class of words are more or less fully exemplified in English grammar,

which does not distinguish the noun by syntactical or logical peculiarities.

Whatever of special interest, therefore, attaches to the English noun, must depend upon its etymological character, or the extent to which it may be derived from, or converted into, other parts of speech, the changes of signification which particular nouns undergo, and the number of distinct objects to which our language has given appropriate names. The very important question of the relation between the signification of nouns and the moral and intellectual character of those who employ them, has been already touched upon, and its more full consideration belongs elsewhere. First, then, of nouns as originative or derivative, as etymological material, or etymological product. There are languages in which almost all words may interchangeably assume every syntactical and logical relation, and each root in its turn run through all the grammatical categories. Of all the improvements which could be devised for speech, if speech were susceptible of artificial amelioration, this would be one of the most convenient. Our word *hand* may serve as an example of this; we have from this root the verb *to hand*, to deliver by hand, and as Milton uses it, to join hands; the verb *handle*, to use or hold with the hand, to manipulate, and, figuratively, to treat of or discuss; the adjectives *handleable*, that which may be handled, *handless*, without hands, *handy*, skilful, ingenious, convenient, or what is still better expressed by the Latin *dexterous*, to which the etymological correlative would be *righthandy*; the adverb *handily*, skilfully; the secondary noun *handle*, that by which a thing is lifted, and, more remotely, the adjective *handsome*, and adverb *handsomely*, which, however, are of doubtful etymology, and used in a sense very divergent from that of the supposed root. Besides these derivatives, we have numerous compounds into which *hand* enters, but these do not belong to the subject we are at this moment pursuing. The power of thus varying the noun is a real advantage which modern English has, or had (for at present we make much less use of it than formerly) over the Anglo-Saxon. In the struggle between Norman French and Anglo-Saxon after the Conquest, the native dialect of England was for a time subdued, and undoubtedly in real danger of ex-

termination. When at length it revived, it was with much loss of its pristine power. Its inflections were gone, and its facility of composition very much restricted. These it strove in vain to regain, but in its efforts it struck out a new path of improvement, and but for the influence of classical literature, which printing made predominant, and the consequent introduction of numerous Latin words and forms, that path would have been pursued to very important results.* The Anglo-Saxon was rather synthetical than analytical in its tendencies, and adopted new combinations and compositions with great ease, but lent itself less readily to derivative changes. Hence, though there are, I think, not less than a hundred Saxon compounds into which the noun *hand* enters, yet the only true derivatives I find are *handlian* and *handle*, whereas we have made five or six new English uncompounded words from this one root. At present, the movement is quite in the contrary direction, and we incline in more ways than one to borrow from foreign sources rather than to grow from our own germs, and manufacture from our own material. The verbalization, if I may so express it, of a noun, is now a difficult matter, and we shrink from the employment even of well-authorized old *nominal* verbs. It is to old English that we owe our verbs *to man*, *to house*, *to horse*,† *to wood* and *to water*, *to game*, *to saddle* and *bridle*, *to shield*, *to sail*, *to fine*, *to fish*, *to fowl*, *to stone*, (*lapidare*, Lat.), *to dust*, (*stäuben*, Ger., *spolverare*, It.) *to sand a floor*, *to iron clothes or a wagon*, *to shoe a horse*, (*ferrer un cheval*, Fr.) Shakespeare and Sylvester even go the length of forming a verb from the generic name of a divinity :

Some, *Godd'ing* Fortune, idol of ambition ;

godd'ing being used for deifying. *To dishearten* maintains its ground, but the place of its converse *to hearten* is generally supplied by the much inferior French verb *to encourage*, though some eminent writers have lately revived our excellent old word,

* See Lecture xviii.

† The following advertisement is an example of an arbitrary meaning imposed for want of expressive verbal terminations : The Committee of Aldermen invite proposals *to Horse* the prison vans.—*Daily News*.

and at least the participial adjective *heartened* may be considered as re-established.*

Verbs of this class are generally from Saxon roots. For the most part they refer to sensuous objects or material operations, and they are uniformly characterized by great directness and force of expression. We have, in some few cases, applied this process to nouns of foreign origin, as, for example, to *station* and to *post* a sentry, to *provision* a fortress, to *girdle* a tree, to *preface* an address, and Milton has "to *syllable* men's names"; but such cases are not frequent.

The Anglo-Saxon nouns had a large number of characteristic endings, by which they were distinguished from other parts of

* Gower made a noun of the verb *will*,

But yet is nought my fest all plain,
But all of *woldes* and of wishes, &c.

Conf. Am. Pauli, III. 82.

Several examples of the use of *to out* as a verb will be found in Richardson. There is some confusion between this verb and the legal term *to oust*, which has been supposed to be from the French *ôter* (*oster*), and *oust* may be but a Gallicized orthography of *out*. The word *outing* in the sense of *excursion*, *journey*, is now a common colloquialism, made familiar, perhaps, by Mrs. Whitney's *Patience Strong's Outings*.

Foreigners and children often seize on the primitive analogies of language, and by an unconscious generalization employ forms of expression, which, though so nearly obsolete as to strike us as un-English, are nevertheless strictly idiomatic. Hence they constantly employ nouns for verbs, and few Americans have travelled in Europe without being asked by Continental servants ambitious of displaying their English, "Did you *bell*?" for "Did you ring?" Children will say "*it winds*," for "it blows," and in this instance they create, not revive, a Saxon verb, for neither the Anglo-Saxon nor the Scandinavian languages possess a verb conjugate to the noun *wind*, and corresponding to the Mæso-Gothic *vaiān* and the German *wēhen*.

In old English and Scottish popular poetry, ballads especially, *my lone*, or *lone*, *her lone*, are often used for *I alone*, *she alone*, &c. I lately heard a child of three years old say, on several different occasions: "Put me into the swing: I can't get up *my lone*."

Alone, as well as the corresponding word in all the Gothic languages, is a compound of *all* and *one*, and it is altogether recent in origin, for it does not exist in Anglo-Saxon, Old-Northern, Mæso-Gothic, Old-High-German, or even Middle-High-German, though it is found in the modern representatives of all these dialects. Robert of Gloucester has *al one*, as "The Vortiger was *al one*," and Robert de Brunne, *alone*, at least according to the printed copies; but, in general, the words were written separately, and syntactically connected with

speech. Some of these probably were mere dialectic differences, but they were, no doubt, all originally significant of gender, quality, action, or state, though there are many of them to which no distinct force can now be assigned, even in the earliest forms in which the language has come down to us. In modern English these endings have, in great part, been dropped or transformed, or have lost their significance, and are no longer distinguishable as expressive elements of the noun. Some of them, however, are in active, though constantly diminishing use, and still retain their

the objective of a personal or sometimes a possessive pronoun, until near the close of the fourteenth century. Thus Gower :

But, for he may nought *all him one*
In sundry places do justice, &c.

Paul's ed., III. 178.

The king, which made mochel mone,
Tho stood as who saith *all him one*
Withoute wife, &c.

Ibid., III. 235.

All min one.

Ibid., I. 45.

Walking *myñ one.*

Piers Ploughman, 154.

In the Harrowing of Hell, a religious poem written not far from the year 1300, published by Halliwell, Dominus says to Satan :

Ant thou shalt wyte wel to day
That mine wolle y have away.
Wen thou bilevest *al thyn one*,
Thenne myht thou grede and grone.

Halliwell renders the verse, "Wen thou bilevest al thyn one," "When thou hast none but thine *own* left." This Garnett contemptuously cites as an instance of the way in which Halliwell "can pervert the sense of the very plainest passages," and he explains the verse by ascribing to *bilevest* the sense of *lovest*, *renouncest*, so that the meaning would be, "When thou *lovest* all thine *own*," that is, all the souls of the patriarchs and prophets in the *limbus patrum*, who were released by Christ on his ascension, and whom Satan had claimed as his *own*.

But Garnett's error is as gross as Halliwell's. Christ could not be supposed to admit that these souls were Satan's *own*, and the true meaning of the passage is, when thou *remainest alone*, the limbus being left vacant by the rescue of the souls whom Christ carried up to Paradise.

It is true that not much importance can be attached to the orthography of *one*, but I know no instance in which *own* is spelled *one*; and the sense of *remain* continued to be sometimes ascribed to *bileve* as late as the time of Chaucer. See Cant. T., 10897.

original power. Such is the syllable *-er*, which we add to the infinitive of verbs, and thus form verbal nouns signifying the agent or subject of the verb from which it is derived. Thus a *runner* is he who runs, a *writer* he who writes. This ending, with more or less difference of orthography, is common to all the Scandinavian, Teutonic, and Romance tongues, and the convenience, not to say the necessity, of such a form will probably keep it alive in all of them, in spite of the general effort of modern languages to free themselves from grammatical characteristics. The fact that it exists in all the sources from which our general vocabulary is drawn, commends it to us as an essential element of speech, and we apply it indiscriminately to verbal roots from whatever origin derived. Although I am much averse to orthographical novelties, yet I admit there is force in the arguments which have been urged for the spelling *-er* in preference to *-or*, even in words of Latin etymology, and I think we should gain both in uniformity and in expressiveness by the general adoption of the Saxon form.

This termination was originally masculine exclusively, the corresponding Anglo-Saxon feminine termination being *-stre*, as *seamestre*, still extant in the form *seamster* or *sempster*. I find no positive evidence to show that the termination *-ster* was ever regarded as a distinctive feminine ending in English,* and

* In Piers Ploughman, v. 434-7, we have this passage :

Baksters and brewesters
 And bochiers-manye ;
 Wollen webbesters
 And weveres of lynnem.

There is nothing in the context which would authorize the inference that the ending in these words is indicative of sex, but at verse 2901-2, we read,

My wif was a webbe
 And wollen cloth made :

which gives some countenance to the supposition that the weaving of *woollens* was a feminine occupation, and therefore that *webster* meant a female weaver.

Brewesters and *baksters* occur at verse 1514 of the same poem, but there is nothing in the period to indicate the sex, and the same remark applies to *spynesters* in verse 2003, and *wafresters* in verse 3772. *Wafrer* is applied to a male seller of wafers in verse 8478, but *regrater* to an occupation exercised by a woman, in verse 2923 :

Rose the regrater
 Was hire righte name.

Halliwell says *bakester* is used in Derbyshire for a female baker, and he sup-

I believe *spinster* is the only remaining word of this formation which is confined to the female sex. But here, the signification in which the word is now alone used, that of an unmarried woman, determines the gender, and the ending has no grammatical force. Besides the general tendency of English to the rejection of distinctive forms, there was, in this case, a special reason for discarding an ending, which the introduction of so many foreign words with the same terminal syllable had made too ambiguous to serve any longer its original purpose. The number of English words in *-ster*, taken directly from foreign languages, or formed from roots ending in *-st*, is not less than one hundred, and most of these

poses both *bakester* and *brewster* to be feminine in the passages cited from Piers Ploughman, but certainly without internal evidence. He also gives *sewster* as a feminine noun in the Somersetshire dialect, and cites the Promptorium Parvulorum to the same purpose.

Dycynistre is used by Chaucer in the Knightes Tale, v. 2818, and as it is applied to the narrator of the tale, it was certainly masculine. Family names are usually, if not always, derived from the male ancestor, and Baxter, (Lakester,) Brewster, and Webster, were therefore probably used as masculines at a very early period.

In Wright's Vocab. An., Vol. I., pp. 181, 194, 232, *textor*, Lat., is defined as *webster*, Eng. In the same volume, Aelfric's Glossary, p. 84, *pistor* is explained as, A. S. *bacere*; p. 88, as *bacestre*; p. 93, as *bakestre*; p. 194, *pan-dozatrix* is explained as *bacstare*, and on p. 200, *brasiatrix*, as *brewster*.

Among the various readings in the Wycliffite versions, I find several instances of feminine nouns in *-ster*. They are, *daunstere*, Ecclus. ix. 4; *dwestere*, Jer. xxi. 13; *wilstere*, Jer. ix. 17; *sleestere*, Tobit iii. 9; *syngstere*, II. Paral. xxxv. 25, and I. Esdras ii. 65, and, in one instance, in the text of Purvey's version, II. Kings xix. 35. With this last exception, the texts employ, *daunseresse*, *dwelleresse*, *weileresse*, *sleeresse*, and *syngeresse*, or *woman-synger*. Other remarkable feminines in these versions are, *disciplisse*, *deuoueresse*, *ser-uantesse*, and *thrallesse*.

P. Ploughman, Vision, 8087, has "Beton the *breuestere*," where the context shows it to be feminine, and v. 8683, "As a *shepsteres* shere," feminine also, *shepster* not meaning a *sheep-shearer*, as Wright erroneously supposes, but a *seamstress*, as appears from Palsgrave, v. *shepstarre*, and Nares, v. *shepster*. *Shepster* is *shapster*, one who *shapes*, forms, or cuts out, linen garments.

Tombestere, a female dancer, occurs more than once in Chaucer, and *fruit-estere*, Cant. Tales, 12413, is apparently feminine. Minsheu makes *seamster* feminine, and Ben Jonson, in the Sad Shepherd, II. 3, employs *sew'ster* as a feminine, but in a rustic dialect. On the other hand, we find in P. Ploughman, Vision, 4793, *canonistres* masculine. There is, then, no doubt that this termination was sometimes regarded as a feminine, but such does not appear ever to have been the general English usage.

are either masculine or incapable of gender, while of Saxon words originally feminine with this ending, I believe that *sempster*, *songster*, and *spinster* are the only ones still extant. *Songster* and *sempster* may be of either gender, although they are no doubt derivatives of the Saxon feminines *sangistre* and *seamestre*, and not, as Webster strangely supposes, formed from the radical, and the root of the verb *to steer*.* The fact that the termination *-ess* has been applied to both these words, to make them feminine, shows that the ending *-ster* was not considered as certainly indicative of gender. It is not used as a feminine sign in *Layamon*, in the *Ormulum*, or, as I believe, in *Robert of Gloucester*. We may therefore conclude that it is not to be regarded as having ever had any binding force in English grammar.

The feminine ending *-ess* is an indirect derivative of the Latin termination *-ix*, but it has never been very freely used in English, and has been applied to few native radicals. Indeed, it has been dropped from many alien words to which it was formerly attached.†

We still possess and employ, though with reluctance, the diminutive ending in *-ling*, as in *gosling*, *nestling*, *nursling*, in which last word the root is Romance, but the coincidence of this termination with that of the modern form of the active participle, and the number of verbal nouns derived from roots ending in *-le*, have nearly deprived it of its significance, and the Norman diminutive in *-et* has gradually supplanted it, even in words of Saxon origin. The endings in *-dom*, *-hood* and *-ship* are still employed, but with constantly diminishing frequency, and the termination in *-ness*, indicative of quality, and that in *-er*, of action, are the only Saxon finals which can be said to have fairly maintained their ground. The former of these, as well as the latter, we have applied to French and Latin roots without any feeling of incongruity, but the present course of the language is adverse to the formation of new words of this class, and of the fifteen hundred nouns ending in *-ness* contained in Walker's rhyming Dictionary, a very large number are already obsolete, if indeed ever authorized.

* Webster's Dictionary, under *songster*.

† *Spouseesse*, *cosinesse*, and *synneresse*, occur in Wycliffe's New Testament, and *sainless* in Bishop Fisher's works. Fuller, Comment on Ruth, p. 104, has *shee-saint*.

The place of the obsolete and obsolescent Saxon nominal terminations has been in part supplied by Latin and French endings in *-ty*, *-ion*, *-ude*, *-ure*, *-ess*, *-ice*, and *-ment*, but there is very generally a reluctance to adapt these to Saxon roots, which much restricts the formation of nouns from other words. *Betterment*, much used by the best writers of the seventeenth century in the sense of *improvement*, *growing*, or *making better*, either in a moral or a physical sense, has nearly gone out of use, and is hardly employed except as a technical term in the jurisprudence of some of our States. Spenser's *unruliment* does not appear to have been much employed by other writers, if indeed not altogether peculiar to himself.* In the case of *enlistment*, we feel no such reluctance, and the reason is, that though we have the word *list* in Anglo-Saxon, in the sense of a border, yet *list*, a roll, whence our verb to enlist, is probably French, and we readily adjoin a French nominal ending to a verb of French etymology. We have more than three hundred English verbal nouns with the ending *-ment*, of which only fifteen or twenty are from Saxon roots, and the proportion of native nouns with other foreign endings is scarcely larger. Were all these Latin and French terminations as readily applicable to Saxon roots as are the Saxon endings to foreign radicals, we could hardly be said to have suffered a loss by the exchange of one class for the other, inasmuch as the Gothic characteristic is not essentially more expressive than the Roman. But with respect to the prefixes applied to nouns the case seems to me otherwise. For instance, our inseparable prefixes *mis* and *wan*, which, until the invention of printing familiarized the English mind and ear with the prefixes of the classical languages, were applied to the noun and the adjective, as well as to the verb, had greater force of expression than any of the particles which have been introduced to supply their place. The negative or privative *un-*, was also formerly freely applied to nouns, as it is at this day in German, such words as an *ungentleman*, *unnobleness*, *unhap*, *unkunnyng*, (ignorance,) *unpower*, (impotence,) *unright*, and the like, often occurring in old writers. In words of Latin origin,

* *Regal* or *regul*, a rule, occurs in Anglo-Saxon, as well as in most of the Gothic dialects, and therefore is no stranger to English ears, but whether it is a native or a borrowed word is a matter of much doubt.

modern English generally substitutes *non* for the inseparable particle *un-*, as *non-conformity*, though we still say *unconformable strata*.*

A curious mode of changing, extending, or restricting the sense of nouns, not indeed peculiar to English, is by ascribing different meanings to the singular and the plural. Thus in some communities, where social revolutions are frequent, where the low of one generation are the lofty of the next, and where at the same time there is so little of honest pride, that the son is ashamed of the paternal virtues to which he owes his own high position, it is very bad manners to ask a gentleman, what was his father's calling, and yet the manner of putting the question may be wholly unexceptionable; and on the other hand, one may scrupulously conform to every rule of good breeding, and therefore be entitled to the praise of good manners, while the manner of every action may be ungraceful, or even almost ungracious. And when it was asked whether a wealthy lawyer had acquired his great riches by his practice, there was a terrible satire in the answer: "Yes, by his practices."

The formation of abstract nouns from the adjective, or rather the use of the adjective itself as an abstract noun, is an important feature of many languages, but not suited to the genius of modern English, because the want of distinctions of gender in our adjectives makes all such expressions equivocal. We do indeed, copying from the Greek, use the adjective *beautiful*, in the form *the beautiful*, to express the quality or essence of beauty, but as the form of the adjective does not indicate number or gender, it is not in such phrases necessarily taken abstractly, as is *το καλόν* in Greek. Nouns of this sort have a very peculiar force in languages which, like Greek and German, admit them, nor can their place be exactly supplied by any periphrase. The *το καλόν* of the Greeks, the *das Schöne* of the Germans, have no precise English equivalent, and the loss of the neuter adjective, and consequently of the abstract noun formed from it, in modern English, is a serious deficiency in our philosophical and critical vocabulary.

* Trench employs *unaacquaintance*, a hybrid authorized by good writers, though now little used.

On the Auth. Version of the New Testament, chapter II.

The only striking peculiarity of the English adjective, as compared with the same part of speech in other languages, is its invariability, or its want of distinct forms for different cases, genders, and numbers. The irreconcilability of the Norman and the Saxon modes of inflecting adjectives compelled the English to discard them both, but the Saxon endings of number especially were not given up until the fifteenth century, and some of them held out later. Hooker, who spells the adjective *dear* without an *e* in the singular, in using it as a plural noun, spells it *deare*, and says "my deare" for my dears, where a modern sermonizer would introduce a noun, and say "my dear hearers." Another remarkable form in a single instance survived almost as long. I refer to *alder*, or, sometimes and more properly *aller*, the genitive plural of the adjective *all*. Thus our *alder father*, our *aller father*, means father of us all; *alder* or *aller* being properly an adjective, and *our* used as a personal, not an adjective, pronoun in the genitive plural. Palsgrave very frequently, and indeed most usually, gives the adjective a plural form in *s* where it follows the noun, as verbs passives, verbs actyves personalles.

There was, for a long time, an increasing inclination to reject the regular comparative and superlative degrees, and to substitute in all cases the comparison by *more* and *most*, a construction Norman in form, though the qualifying adverbs are Saxon. The prevalence of this latter method at the period in question was one of the fruits of that Gallic influence, which, during the early and latter part of the seventeenth century, so seriously threatened the literary and linguistic as well as the political nationality of England, but happily we have now returned to our native allegiance, and the legitimate and expressive Saxon inflection has recovered its lawful ascendancy.* The rejection of the signs of case, gender,

* We employ, in polysyllabic adjectives the inflected superlative more freely than the inflected comparative, for the reason that the ending *er* has a different significance when applied to nouns, and therefore an adjective compared by that ending might be confounded with a noun of like form. See Lecture vi.

The following extract from a letter, written about 1470, shows a curious succession of superlatives in both modes of comparison: "Ye most corteys gentilyst wysest kyndest most companabyll freest largeest most bownteous knyght my Lord the Erle of Arran. * * * He is on the lyghtest delyuerst best spoken fayrest Archer devowghtest most p' fyghte and trestest to hys Lady of all the Knyghtys that ever I was aqweyntyd wt."—Paston Letters, II. 96.

and number is attended with the common inconvenience of all our syntax, the necessity of assigning to the adjective, as well as to other words, a fixed position in the period; but in point of force and precision of expression, little has been lost by discarding the inflections of this part of speech, and especially the superfluous distinction between the definite and the indefinite forms.

The English verb, in common with that of the Germanic dialects, is distinguished from the Latin and Greek by the want of a passive voice and of future tenses, by the fewness of its past tenses, and by the admission of the letter-change as a mode of conjugation. I shall notice hereafter a tendency of early English to the creation of new verbal forms,* but I have not detected any unequivocal trace of a rudimental passive, of the development of which the Swedish and Danish offer so interesting an example, or of a true future, for the occasional coalescence of *will* and *shall* with the verb to be, as *wilbe* and *shalbe*, is rather a matter of orthographical and typographical convenience than a grammatical agglutination. It is a curious fact that the Romance languages, as well as the Romic, at one period of their history, all rejected the ancient inflected futures, and formed new compound or auxiliary ones, employing for that purpose the verbs *will* and *shall*, or *have* in the sense of duty or necessity, though French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese have now agglutinated the infinitive and auxiliary into a simple future.† Why is it that the Gothic languages have always possessed a past tense, never a future? Why did the Romance dialects retain the Latin past forms, and reject the Latin future? A philological fact of so comprehensive a nature must have some common psychological ground, for we certainly cannot ascribe it to any external linguistic influence. It is perhaps not an absurd suggestion, that we may find the explanation in the habits of thought and feeling resulting from states of society, which had too little of the elements of stable security, steady progress, and seductive hope, to encourage much speculation as to what the morrow might bring forth. To our rude ancestors, and to the people of southern Europe in the middle ages, the present was full of stern necessities; the past, of hard and painfully impressed realities. The future offered but dim

* See Lecture xviii.

† See Lecture xv.

uncertainties, and hopeless anticipations. Hence they lived, not in a dream-land of the imagination to be realized in the good time coming, but in a *now* which demanded the exertion of their mightiest energies, or in a *past*, whose actuality had stamped itself upon their inmost natures. The future was too doubtful to justify the employment of words implying prediction or even hope, and they appropriated to it forms indicative of a present purpose, determination, or duty, not of prophecy or of expectation.

The English verb is moreover distinguished from that of most other languages by the remarkable peculiarity of wanting characteristic radical forms. To this observation there are a few exceptions. We have the Greek and French ending *-ize*, as in *energize*,* the Latin *-ate*, as in *create*, and the Latin and French *-fy*, as to *fructify*, to *specify*. But these are employed only with Greek, Latin, and French roots; and such anomalous derivatives as Sylvester's *boundify* and our American *happify* have met with little success,† so that these endings are rather to be considered as elements of the imported word than as possessing a properly English significance. We have also the Saxon prefix *be-*, as to *bedew*, to *beleaguer*, generally applied only to verbal and *nominal* roots, though we sometimes verbalize an adjective by the aid of this prefix, as to *besot*, which is authorized by Milton and Shakespeare. But this formation is repugnant to the language, and nothing but the want of a good synonym has enabled Mr. Jefferson's verb to *belittle* to keep its place. The English verb, like that of most other languages, is, in the majority of cases, derived from a noun, and the want of a specific verbal form renders the transfer of a word from the class of nouns to that of verbs perfectly idiomatic and proper, though, as I have just remarked, we now rarely employ that process. There is one important ending, however, by the aid of which we may convert adjectives into verbs. This is the ending *-en*, as to *blacken*. The resemblance between this form and the Saxon infinitive ending *-an*, naturally suggests the supposition of their identity, and this view would seem to be confirmed by the fact that it is applied to Saxon radicals only, but grammarians generally consider the coincidence of sound accidental, and the

* Rev. F. W. Robertson, in his *Sermons*, uses *soborize*.

† Robertson uses *happified*.—Address to Working Man's Institute.

modern termination in *-en*, which is not the sign of a mood like the Saxon *-an*, but the characteristic of a part of speech, is regarded as the development of a new grammatical form. A few verbs of this class, as *lengthen*, *strengthen*, *heighten*, are derived from nouns, the noun being probably employed instead of the conjugate adjective for orthoepical reasons, but, in general, only adjectives expressing the sensuous qualities of objects at present admit of this change. In earlier stages of the language it was otherwise. In the *Ormulum* we find to *gooden*, to make good, also to benefit, and Milton and Southey employ the verb to *worsen*, to make or grow worse, but this has unhappily fallen into disuse.* The reason of this is doubtless to be found in the disposition which long prevailed to restrict the employment of Saxon words to the expression of the material and the sensuous, and to borrow the phraseology of moral and intellectual discourse from the Greek, the Latin, and the French.

The English substantive verb, or that which expresses *being*, and which in most instances serves only as a copula to connect the subject and the predicate,† partakes of the irregularity which generally marks the conjugation of the corresponding verb in other languages. Its different parts are doubtless derived from different radicals, for *be* and *am* can hardly be supposed to be

* In Wycliffe's time, the adjective was often used as a verb, without any change of form except such as was occasioned by the inflections then in use. Thus, Matthew xxiii. 12: "Forsothe he that shal *hise* hym self shal be *mekid*; and he that shal *meeke* hym self shal ben enhaunsid." And in Luke xiv. 11: "And he that *mekith* him self, shal be *highed*." Wotton makes *honest* a verb, with no change but that of inflection.

† The pretence, whereby a desperate discontented assassinate would after the perpetration have *honested* a meer private revenge." *Reliquiæ*, 1651, p. 84. The use of the passive form *assassinatè* for *assassin* is also noticeable in this extract.

Gower uses *more* and *less* as transitive verbs.

What he woll make *lasse*, he *lasseth*,
What he woll make *more* he *moreth*.

Pauli's ed., III. 147.

So that it mighte nought be *mored*. *Ibid.*, 254.

The verbs *to less* and *to honest* are both found in the older Wycliffite version, the former in *Ecclus.* xviii. 5, xix. 5, 7, where the later text has *make less* and *made less*; the latter in *Ecclus.* xi. 28.

† See Sicard's *Cours d'instruction d'un Sourd-muet*, 1800.

divergent forms of the same words. The Saxon *weorthan*, which corresponded to the German *werden*, *to become*, has unfortunately become obsolete, and now survives only in the phrases: *wo worth the day!* *wo worth the man!* and the like. *Weorthan*, though in some sort often an auxiliary, was not used as a sign of the passive, like the German *werden*, but generally retained its independent signification, and its disappearance is a real loss to the language.*

In the opinion of the ablest linguists, English has lost nothing in force, variety, or precision of expression, by the simplification of its forms, and the substitution of determinatives for inflections. The present movement is still in the same direction. The subjunctive is evidently passing out of use, and there is good reason to suppose that it will soon become obsolete altogether. The compound past infinitive also, formerly very frequent, is almost disused. Lord Berners says: *should have aided to have destroyed*, *had made haste to have entered*, and the like, and this was common in colloquial usage until a very recent period. In cases of this sort, where the relations of time are clearly expressed by the first auxiliary, it is evident that nothing is gained by employing a second auxiliary to fix more precisely the category of the infinitive, but where the simple inflected past tense precedes the infinitive, there is sometimes ground for the employment of an auxiliary with the latter. *I intended to go* and *I intended to have gone*, do not necessarily express precisely the same thing, but the latter form is not likely long to resist the present inclination to make the infinitive strictly aoristic, and such forms as *I had intended to go* will supersede the past tense of the latter mood.

* *Weorthan*, or *worthen*, is not unfrequent in early English. For example, in one of the old Prologues to the English Scriptures, Wycliffite Versions, I., p. 40, note, we find :

“Alle gladnes and delite of this erthely vanyte vanyschith, and at the last *worthish* to nought.” In fact this verb did not become altogether obsolete until the seventeenth century, for Heywood says :

“Thou therefore that *wast* nothing before thou *wert*, &c., &c.” “Thou, which *wast* not, *wert* made.” “Give me a reason (if thou canst) how thou *wert* created.” The Hierarchie of the blessed Angells, London, 1635, p. 383.

In these cases, *wert* is not the subjunctive of the verb to be, but a remnant of *worthen*, and, in the last two, used as a passive auxiliary.

LECTURE XV.

GRAMMATICAL INFLECTIONS.*

I

IN considering the interjection, it was stated that words of that class were distinguished from all other parts of speech by the quality of inherent and complete significance, so that a single ejaculatory monosyllable, or phrase not syntactically connected with a period, might alone communicate a fact, or, in other words, stand for and express an entire proposition. The interjection might be involuntarily uttered, and impart a fact of a nature altogether subjective to the speaker, as, for example, that he was affected with sensations of physical pain or pleasure, with grief or with terror; or it might assume a form more approximating to that of syntactic language, and address itself to an external object, as an expression of love, of pity, of hate or execration, of desire, command, or deprecation.

The application of the distinction between interjections, as parts of speech, which, used singly and alone, may communicate a fact, a wish, or command, and therefore express an entire proposition, and parts of speech which become significant only by their connection with other vocables, is properly limited to the vocabulary of languages where, as in our own, words admit of little or no change of form, and to the simplest, least variable form of words in those other languages which express the grammatical relations, and certain other conditions of the parts of speech, by what is called inflection.

I propose now to illustrate the distinction between inflected

* The illustrations, and much of the argument, in this and the following lectures on the same subject, are too familiar to be instructive to educated persons, but I have introduced them, in the hope that those engaged in teaching languages might derive some useful suggestions from them.

and uninflected, or grammatically variable and grammatically invariable words, and to inquire into the essential character and use of inflections. *Inflection* is derived from the Latin *flecto*, I bend, curve or turn, and inflections are the changes made in the forms of words, to indicate either their grammatical relations to other words in the same period, or some accidental condition of the thing expressed by the inflected word. The possible relations and conditions of words are very numerous, and some languages express more, some fewer of them by the changes of form called inflections. Strictly speaking, inflections are changes of the simpler form to indicate grammatical category or syntactical relation. But the word is also applied to changes expressing logical distinctions, as *grandis*, *grandior*, &c.

The languages which embody the general literature of Europe, ancient and modern, employ inflections for the following purposes: *First*, in nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and articles, to denote—

- (a) gender,
- (b) number, and
- (c) case, or grammatical relation.

Secondly, in adjectives and adverbs, to mark degrees of comparison. *Thirdly*, in adjectives, to indicate whether the word is used in a definite or an indefinite application. *Fourthly*, in verbs, to express number, person, voice, mood, and tense; or, in other words, to determine whether the nominative case, the subject of the verb, is one or more, singular or plural; whether the speaker, the person addressed, or still another, is the subject; whether the state or action or emotion expressed by the verb is conceived of solely with reference to the subject, or as occasioned by an external agency; whether that state, action, or emotion is absolute or conditional; and whether it is past, present, or future.*

* No single one of the languages to which I refer employs inflection for all the purposes I have specified. The Greek and Latin have the most complete, the English the most imperfect system of variation. The Icelandic, Swedish, and Danish exhibit the rare case of a modern passive voice, but, like the other tongues of the Gothic stock, they want the future tense; and, on the other hand, they possess, in common with these latter, the definite and indefinite forms of the adjective, which existed also in Anglo-Saxon, but are not distinguished in Greek and Latin. There may be some doubt whether this distinction is not rather a special exception than a general characteristic of the inflec-

Interjections, prepositions, and conjunctions are uninflected, or invariable in form.

The variations of the verb are usually the most numerous, and the uses and importance of inflections may be well illustrated by comparing an English uninflected with a Latin inflected verb.

The English defective verb *ought* is the old preterite of the verb to *owe*, which was at an early period used as a sort of auxiliary with the infinitive, implying the sense of necessity, just as we, and many of the Continental nations, now employ, *have* and its equivalents. *I have much to do*, in English; *J'ai beaucoup à faire*, in French; *Ich habe viel zu thun*, in German, all mean, substantially, there is much which I must do. Afterwards, by a common process in language, the general idea of necessity involved in this use of the word *owe* resolved itself into two distinct senses: the one of pecuniary or other liability in the nature of a debt, or the return of an equivalent for property, services, or favors received; the other that of moral obligation, or at least of expediency. Different forms from the same root were now appropriated to the two senses, to *owe*, with a newly formed weak preterite, *owed*, being exclusively limited to the notion of debt, and the simple form *ought* being employed in all moods, tenses, numbers, and persons, to express moral obligation or expediency, or as an auxiliary verb.

Before I proceed to illustrate the use of inflections by comparing the invariable *ought* with a Latin inflected verb of similar signification, I will pause to offer some further observations on the history of the verb to *owe*. This verb is derived from a Gothic radical signifying to *have*, to possess, or, as we now say, in another form of the same word, to *own*. Shakespeare very often uses *owe* in this sense, both in the present and the new or weak preterite form, *owed*; for the separation between the two forms *owed* and *ought*, though it commenced before Shakespeare's time, was not fully completed till a later period. Thus in *Twelfth Night*, at the close of the first act, these lines occur:

Fate, show thy force: ourselves we do not *owe*;
What is decreed must be, and be this so!

tional system which belongs to the cultivated languages of Europe, but the great importance of Scandinavian, German, and Anglo-Saxon literature entitles the peculiarities of Gothic grammar to a conspicuous place in all treatises upon modern and especially English philology.

In like manner in the *Tempest*, I. 2 :

Thou dost here usurp
The name thou *ow'st* not.

And in *Macbeth*, I. 4 :

To throw away the dearest thing he *ow'd*,
As 'twere a careless trifle.

In these, and very many other cases, the sense is unmistakably to *possess* or *own*. In English grammar, the auxiliary verbs incline to be invariable, as *must*, *will*, *shall* ; and *ought*, therefore, at last followed the same rule. But, for some time after the distinction between pecuniary and moral obligation, as expressed by different forms of this word, made itself felt, the present tense *owe* continued to be occasionally employed for both purposes, such expressions as you *owe* to do this, being not unfrequent,* and on the other hand, *ought* was occasionally, though rarely, used in place of *owed* as late as the time of Dryden. The two phrases, you *owe* to do this, and you *ought* to do this, are so nearly alike in sound, that they would readily be confounded in pronunciation, and consequently in writing, and the difficulty of distinguishing between them facilitated the application of the rule that auxilia-

* Thus, in one of the prologues to Wycliffe's translation of Clement's *Harmony*, (Wycliffite Versions, I. xv.) "Symple men *owen* not dispute aboute holy writ * * but they *owen* stedfastly bileue." In this instance, the omission of the infinitive sign *to* is remarkable, as showing that *owe*, though conjugated, was regarded by the writer of the prologue as a true auxiliary, but this does not seem to have been the general contemporaneous practice. In the will of Louis Clifford, A. 1404, (Southey's *Cid*, 407,) we find, "all things which *owen* in such caas *to* be don." I believe Chaucer always uses the particle *to* before the infinitive in this construction, and the same rule is followed in the Apology for the Lollards ascribed to Wycliffe, as well as generally in the Wycliffite versions.

So in Tyndale *Math.* iii. 14. "I owe for to be cristened of thee."

In a proclamation of Henry III., A.D. 1258, given by Boucher from Henry's *History of England*, and often referred to as the earliest specimen of English, both senses of *owe* are exemplified. "And we heaten alle ure treowe, in the treowthe that heo us *ogen*." "And that ~~sch~~ other helpe that for to done bi tham ilche other, aganes alle men, in alle that heo *oft* for to done." In this document, as printed after Pauli in Haupt's *Zeitschrift*, XI. 2, p. 298, the last clause quoted above reads : "*riht* for to done and to foangen."

ries are invariable.* The introduction of a new grammatical form is always attended with much greater embarrassment than that of a new word, and the precise use of *ought* in a new combination did not at once become settled, for many old authors employed it as an impersonal, that is, as a verb without a nominative, though followed by an objective. Thus Chaucer and others say, *us ought* or *oweth* to do this, *him ought* or *oweth* to do that.† But notwithstanding some vacillation in the grammatical employment of *ought*, it was generally confined to the expression of mere moral or prudential obligation long before *owe* had lost its original sense of proprietorship.‡

We will now, after a digression which I hope is not absolutely irrelevant to our subject, return to the inflections.

Suppose that, in listening to an indistinct conversation, I catch, in a particular period, the word *ought* only. A vague sense of obligation is excited in my mind, but whether that obligation is confessed by the speaker as resting upon himself, singly, or in conjunction with others, or whether he refers to a duty incumbent upon the friend or friends whom he is addressing, upon some third person, or some number of other persons; whether he designates the obligation as past, as now demanding performance, or as hereafter to accrue, absolutely or in some particular contingency; upon none of these points does the form of the word I

* Another instance where the employment of a particular word has been changed, to avoid the same confusion between the present and the past tense, may properly be noticed here. The verb *to use*, formerly served as a frequentative auxiliary in the present as well as the past, such phrases as "do *use* to chant it," "the lodging where you *use* to lie," being of very common occurrence in Shakespeare, and contemporary as well as older writers. *I use to* and *I used to* are so nearly the same in articulation, that in ordinary speaking they could not be distinguished, and the present tense of *use* in this sense is therefore almost entirely abandoned, the indicative present of the dependent verb supplying the place of the frequentative and infinitive.

† "He is a japer and a gabber, and not veray repentant, that eftsones doth thing for which him *oweth* to repent." Chaucer's *Persones Tale*.

‡ It is a curious instance of the seeming caprices of language, that the German *haben* and the French *avoir*, both cognate with the root of *owe*, and like it, employed to express duty or obligation when used as auxiliaries, should in mercantile language have dropped the signification of debt, and contracted an opposite meaning, for *haben* and *avoir* as opposed to *soil* and *doit*, both indicate, not the debit, but the credit side of the account.

have happened to hear give me any information whatever. For any thing that the form of the verb *ought* shows to the contrary, the speaker may have said, *I ought, he ought, we ought, you ought, or they ought*; he may have referred to the present moment, or any past or future time, as the period when the duty becomes obligatory; or he may have treated the duty as contingent or conditional altogether. Now, if the conversation had been carried on in Latin, no such uncertainty about number, person, time, or mood could have arisen, because the termination of the word corresponding to *ought* would, of itself, have resolved every one of these doubts. The moment the word was uttered, even without a pronoun or other nominative, I should have been informed whether the duty was charged upon the speaker; upon one or more persons *to* whom, or one or more persons *of* whom he was speaking; whether the time for the performance was past, present, or future; and whether it was represented as an absolute or as a conditional obligation. To express all possible categories of the word *ought*, we have one form and no more; and the context, the remainder of the sentence in which it occurs, the pronoun or other nominative which precedes, and the infinitive which follows, must be called in to determine its multiplied relations of time, person, and condition. The equivalent of *ought* in Latin is a verb whose radical is conceived to be the monosyllable *deb*,* which still constitutes the first syllable in all the forms of the verb. In the infinitive mood, present tense, the form is *debere*, and this word admits of more than fifty inflections or changes of termination in the active voice alone, all so distinctly marked, that each one instantly suggests to the mind of the hearer the answer to every one of the points I have mentioned as left undetermined by the corresponding English verb *ought*, which expresses nothing but the naked fact of a duty affirmed to be absolutely or conditionally incumbent, at an uncertain time, upon an uncertain person or persons.

* I speak of *deb* as the inflectional *stem*, not the etymological *root* of *debeo*. *Debeo* is considered by some as a contraction of the compound *de-habeo*, I have from, that is, I have from another what still belongs to him, and, therefore, what I *owe* to him. The form *dehabeo* is used by St. Jerome as a negative of *habeo*, I have not, I want; and the etymology I have just mentioned is rather too refined to be probable.

If the isolated word I have caught happen to be *debeo*, I know that the speaker acknowledges a present duty incumbent upon himself; had it been *debuisti*, I should have understood that reference was made to a past obligation of the person addressed; if *debebunt*, to a future duty of more than one third person; if *debuerimus*, to a conditional duty of the speaker and some other person or persons. All these forms are active, and make the person bound the subject of the period; but the duty itself may be made the subject, and then an equally full set of passive inflections may be used, in some cases indeed with the aid of an auxiliary, to express substantially the same ideas.* This may be said to be an extreme case, because although hundreds of Latin verbs are as complete in their inflections as *debere*, yet many are far less so, and on the other hand the English example is a simple auxiliary, and as such little susceptible of inflection. This is indeed true, but it is a mere difference in degree. Our verbs generally, excluding the obsolescent second and third persons singular, in *-est* and *-eth* as *lovest*, *loveth*, have but three or four changes of form, and all the other categories are clumsily expressed by means of auxiliaries.

In like manner, our adjectives admit no inflection whatever, except in the degrees of comparison. Thus the adjective *beautiful* is applied equally to persons of either sex, to the subject or the object of the verb, and to one or more persons, without any change of form. We say a beautiful boy or girl, beautiful boys or girls, whether the substantive to which it is applied be in the nominative, possessive, or objective case. In short, the adjective is, except in comparison, indeclinable, invariable, or uninflected, all of which terms are employed to express the same thing. The Latin adjective *pulcher*, meaning beautiful, has, on the contrary, twelve different forms in the positive degree alone, and in the comparative and superlative twenty-two more, making thirty-four in all.

Thus we say in Latin, in the nominative case, *pulcher puer*, a beautiful boy, *pulchra puella*, a beautiful girl; in the geni-

* We should perhaps not be able to find instances of the actual occurrence of *debeo* as expressive of obligation, in all the active and passive inflections, but such are grammatically and logically possible.

tive or possessive, *pulchri pueri*, of a beautiful boy, *pulchræ puellæ*, of a beautiful girl; in the accusative, corresponding generally to the objective of English grammarians, *pulchrum puerum*, a beautiful boy, *pulchram puellam*, a beautiful girl.*

Some of these forms indeed are equivocal, the same inflection being used with different cases or genders, but nearly all of them clearly and certainly indicate the number, most of them the grammatical relations, and many of them the gender of the noun to which the adjective is applied. Substantives also, admitting in English no change of form, except the indication of the genitive or possessive case and the plural number, go through a wide range of variation in Latin, every syntactical category having its appropriate form. Thus it will have been observed that in the examples I have cited, *pulcher puer* and *pulchra puella*, in every case the termination of the adjective and the noun is the same; *pulcher puer*, *pulchri pueri*, *pulchrum puerum*, *pulchra puella*, &c., but it is not necessary that the endings be alike. It suffices that particular endings be used together. There is another and more common form of the Latin adjective, in which the termination of the masculine nominative is not *-er*, but *-us*. The adjective *bonus*, good, is an example of this, and if *bonus* were used with the same substantive *puer* in the nominative case, the phrase would stand *bonus puer*. Here the endings are not alike, but when the syllable *-us* is once accepted as one of the signs by which the masculine nominative is recognized, there is no difficulty in its use.

In teaching Latin by that excellent method, the writing of themes, it is common to give the pupil the words of which he is to compose his periods in their simplest forms, leaving it to him

* The Horatian verse :

O *matris pulchræ* filia *pulchrior* !
 O fairer daughter of a fair mother ! or,
 O daughter fairer than [thy] fair mother !

is a good example of the superior gracefulness of expression in inflected languages, but it is more equivocal than the English, for, though in this instance there is no logical difficulty in the construction, there is nevertheless a grammatical uncertainty whether the lady addressed is compared with *her* mother, or the mother of some other person.

to inflect them according to their intended relations. In this case, the words constitute no period, express no proposition, and are as meaningless as would be a like number of English verbs, nouns, and adjectives, arranged without reference to grammatical relation, and unsupplied with the particles and auxiliaries which, in connection with certain laws of position, indicate to us categories that, in other languages, are expressed by inflection. For instance, in the English phrase, *sheep fear man*, the words are all in their simplest, uninflected form, the form which, as we suppose, comes nearest to their primitive radical shape, but we have no difficulty in determining their relations to each other. We know that *sheep*, which comes first in the proposition, is the subject or nominative of the verb *fear*, and that *man*, which follows the verb, is its object or objective case. Now, if we take the corresponding Latin words in the simplest, most indefinite form in which they occur in that language, we have *ovis*, *timere*, *homo*; but this succession of words would convey to a Roman no meaning whatever, and in order to make it intelligible to him, we must begin with *ovis*, the nominative singular of the Latin word for sheep, and transform it into *oves*, which is the regular nominative plural of that form of nouns; *timere*, the infinitive corresponding to the English verb *fear*, must be changed into *timent*, which is the indicative present, third person plural of that verb, and *homo*, the nominative singular of the Latin word for man, into the accusative or objective *hominem*, or the plural *homines*. The proposition would then stand, *oves timent hominem*, and as I shall show hereafter, the meaning would to a Roman be equally clear, and precisely the same, if the order of the words were reversed, *hominem timent oves*.*

I have taken my illustrations from Latin, as a tongue more or less familiar to us all, but although, as compared with English, its system of inflection may be considered very complete, yet it is extremely meagre when measured by that of many other lan-

* The case cited in the text is an example of the ordinary Latin construction, but instances of much more artificial structure are frequent, for example: *velim me facias certiozem proximis litteris Cn. Calpio Serviliæ Claudii pater vivone patre suo naufragio perierit an mortuo. Cicero, Epist. DXXXVI. (ad Att. XII. 20).*

guages. In Turkish, for example, a numerous class of verbs has, first, its simple, its reflective, and its reciprocal forms; to each of these belongs a causative form, thus making six, all active and affirmative. Then comes the passive of each, giving us twelve, and every one of these twelve has, besides its affirmative form, a negative and an impossible conjugation, so that we have thirty-six fundamental forms, each of which, in its different moods, tenses, numbers, and persons, admits of about one hundred inflections, thus giving to the verb three or four thousand distinctly marked expressive forms. But even this wide range of inflection by no means exhausts the possible number of variations indicative of grammatical relation, or other conditions of the verb, for, in some languages, there are duals, or verbal forms exclusively appropriated to the number two, and in others, the verb has special inflections for the different genders. Again, in some tongues, there are forms expressive of iteration or repetition, called frequentatives, as from the Latin dico, I say, the frequentative dictito, in nursery English, I *keep saying*. There are also forms expressive of desire, as from the Latin edo, I eat, esurio, I *desire* to eat, I am *hungry*; and of commencement, or tendency, as from the Latin caleo, I am warm, calesco, I *grow* warm; from silva, a wood, silvescere, to *run* to wood, (of a vine plant;) from arbor, a tree, arborescere, to *become* a tree.*

In Spanish and Italian there are numerous terminations applied to substantives and adjectives, indicative of augmentation or diminution, affection or dislike, and these are sometimes piled one upon the other by way of superlative. Thus from the Italian uomo, a man, we have omaccio, a *bad* man; omaccino, a *very little* man; omaccione, a *large*, or sometimes a *noble-minded* man; omacciotto, a *mean little* man; ometto or omettolo, a *small* man; omiciatto or omiciattolo, an *insignificant* man.†

* Fuller, who had a heroic contempt for all word-fetters, translates the hæc planta in Judea arborescit of Grotius, by "hyssope doth *tree* it in Judea." Pisgah Sight of Palestine, I., 10, § 8.

† The admirers of Robert Browning—and what critic in the art of poetry is not among his admirers?—will remember that in the soliloquy of Dominus Hyacinthus de Archangelis, Pauperum Procurator, in the third volume of *The Ring and the Book*, he gives the name of his little son *Giacinto* or *Hyacinthe*

Words of this class, indeed, as well as some of the verbal forms I have cited, may be said to be derivative rather than inflections, because they express qualities or accidents, not syntactical relations or conditions, and belong therefore to the domain of logic, not properly to that of grammar, except simply so far as the whole history of words belongs to grammar. It appears to me, nevertheless, that all *regular* changes of words may be called inflections, and the power of modifying vocables by such changes is as characteristic of different languages as the variations of termination or of radical vowel, which are generally embraced in that designation.

The speech of the Spanish Basques, one of those rare sporadic, or as they have been sometimes called, insular languages, which long maintain themselves in the midst of unallied tongues and hostile influences, appears to be unsurpassed, if not unequalled, in variety of inflection. Thus all the parts of speech, including prepositions, conjugations, interjections, and other particles, admit of declension. There are six nominative forms and twelve cases of the noun. The adjective has twenty cases. Every Romance verb is represented in Basque by twenty-six radical forms, each with a great number of inflections; and different modes of conjugation are employed in addressing a child, a woman, an equal or a superior.*

in at least *seventeen* different forms, all what the Italians call *vezzeggiativi* or *pet names*; and Fanfani, *Voci e maniere del parlar Fiorentino*, gives us the following variations on the theme *d o n n a*:

*Donne, donnone, donnotta, donnetta,
Donnuce, donnelluce, e donnellina,
Donniccion, donnicin, donnicciolette,
Donnelle, donnarelle, donnarine,
Donnaccie, donnellaccie, e donnellolette,
Donnine, donniccuol, donnicciolina,
E donnicciacce. . . .*

When the present beautiful and accomplished Queen of Italy visited Naples some years since, as Crown Princess, the populace who followed her carriage expressed their admiration of her by cries of "oh, che bella ! e che *simpaticona* !" and when an Italian conservative paper taunted the Garibaldians with the insignificant effect produced on the mind of the English public by the her's visit to England in 1866, a liberal contemporary journal replied by magnifying that effect, and said, "ne siamo *contenti, contentoni, contentinoni*." It cannot be pretended that all these forms are distinctively significant, but very many of them are so, at least locally, and they are used with great effect especially in light literature and in conversation.

* Quatrefages, *Souvenirs d'un Naturaliste*.

Thus far we have spoken of simple words only, and their regular derivatives; but if they be compounded, still more complex ideas may be conveyed, and finally, in some languages, by the process to which we have before referred, called agglutination, but not always distinguishable from more familiar modes of composition, or even from inflection, several words may be compressed into one, and thus a single verb may of itself stand for a whole sentence, expressing at once the subject, the copula, the object, as well as numerous predicates or qualifications of all of them.

Not only the objects, but the methods, of inflection are very various in different tongues, and a single language often avails itself of more than one of them. It may be stated that there are two leading modes of variation, both sufficiently exemplified in English, the one consisting in a change of some of the elements, usually vowels, of the root-form, the other in prefixing or subjoining additional syllables, or at least vocal elements, to the radical. Of the first sort, the letter-change, our verb to *ride* is an example, the diphthongal long *i* of the root being changed into *o* in the preterite *rode*, and into simple short *i* in the participle *ridden*. So *run, ran; write, wrote*, (in Old English *wrote*,) *written; fly, flew*, and so forth. In like manner *man* makes *men*, in the plural, *foot, feet; goose, geese*; and the like. The Scandinavian and Teutonic languages, which are so clearly allied to English both in grammar and in vocabulary, much affect the letter-change, and we find in all of them, as well as in Anglo-Saxon, traces of a much more extensive use of this principle at some earlier period of linguistic development. For instance, in all these languages the verb had probably once a regular causative form, consisting in a vowel-change, and it is curious that the remains of this form should be found at this day in the same roots of each of them. Thus, the neuter verb to *fall* has its causative to *fell*, that is to cause to fall, as to *fell* a tree with an axe, to *fell* a man by a blow; the neuter to *lie*, its causative to *lay*, to make to lie, or place; and the neuter to *sit*, its causative to *set*, in several different applications. These same neuters, with their respective causatives, exist in Danish, Swedish and German, as well as in English. The resemblance in their forms leads occasionally to confusion in their use. The causative to *set*, in its different acceptations, is a sad stumbling-block to persons who are not strong in their acci-

dence, and to *lie* and to *lay* are so frequently confounded, that even Byron, in his magnificent apostrophe to the Ocean, was guilty of writing "there let him lay."* Neither the English nor the other languages of the Gothic stock now do, nor, so far as we are able to follow them back historically, ever did, exclude inflection by the mode of addition of letters or syllables, and the two methods of conjugation and declension appear to have co-existed from a very remote period. Although, therefore, we inflect many Saxon primitives by augmentation, yet we confine the letter-change almost wholly to words of that stock, and we generally, if not always, inflect Latin and other foreign roots by augmentation. Thus the verb to *amend*, which we derive from the Latin through the French, forms its preterite *amended* by the addition of the syllable *-ed* to the simple form. The Latin-English noun *possession* makes its plural by subjoining *s*, *possessions*. We still use prefixes largely in composition, but as a flectional element, although they were a good deal employed in Anglo-Saxon, they must now be considered obsolete. The syllabic prefix *ge-*, regularly used in Anglo-Saxon with preterites and often with past participles as well as in many other cases, long retained its ground, and is yet sometimes employed in the archaic style of poetry, in the form of a *y* or *ye*, which, in our orthography, nearly represents the probable pronunciation of the Saxon augment. Spenser uses this augment very frequently, and Thomson often employs it in the *Castle of Indolence*, both of them merely for metrical convenience.†

*The old poem of Kyng Alisaunder has *lie* for *lay* :

So on the schyngil *lyth* the haille,
Every knyght so laide on other.

2210-2211.

† In Milton it occurs but thrice, and in some of these three instances it is applied in a very unusual way. In the first printed of Milton's poetical compositions, the Epitaph on Shakespeare, we find the lines :

What needs my Shakespeare, for his honor'd bones,
The labor of an age in piled stones ?
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid,
Under a star-*y pointing* pyramid ?

Here the syllabic augment *y-* is prefixed to a present participle, a form of which there are very few examples, though *lastinde*, *y-* lasting, or permanent, occurs in the proclamation of King Henry III., referred to in a note on page 322. The prefix is rarely applied to any but Saxon radicals, and thus *y-pointing* is a

Of these two leading modes of variation, the former, which consists in a change of letter in the radical form, is called the *strong*, the latter, consisting in the addition of vocal elements to the root, the *weak* inflection. The principle on which this nomenclature is founded is that the power of varying a word by change of its more unessential constituents, without external aid in the way of composition or addition of syllables, implies a certain vitality, a certain innate, organic strength not possessed by roots capable of variation only by the incorporation or addition of foreign elements. The weak inflection is the regular, the strong, the irregular form of the older grammarians, but according to the theory now in vogue, the strong is the more ancient and regular of the two modes of inflection, and the terms ought to be reversed. The suffrage of children, who are acute philologists, and extremely apt in seizing the analogies of language, and therefore credible witnesses, is in favor of the regularity and linguistic propriety of the weak inflection. They say I *runned*, I *rided*, and the like, and Cobbett, an unlearned, indeed, but excellent practical grammarian, as well as some better instructed philologists, have seriously proposed to reform our grammar by rejecting the strong preterites and participles, and inflecting all verbs according to the regular or weak method.*

double departure from the English idiom. *Y-pointed*, indeed, is found in Robert of Gloucester, and it is possible that Milton wrote *y-pointed*, in which case the meaning would be *pointed or surmounted with a star*, like some of the Egyptian obelisks which have received this decoration since they were transferred to Europe, instead of *pointing to the stars*. In Dr. Masson's ed. of Milton's Poetical Works, 1874, this word is printed thus: *star-y-pointing*. *Igretinge* occurs in the Proclamation of Edward II., A.D. 1250.

It is not here inappropriate to remark that the expletive *ywis* often written *I wis*, as if it were two words, and understood to be the first person indicative present of an obsolete verb *to wis*, to teach, direct, or affirm, with the pronoun of the first person, is only the Anglo-Saxon form of an adverb derived from a participle, and corresponding exactly to the German *gewiss*, meaning *surely, certainly*. The erroneous explanation above alluded to is sometimes found where one would hardly expect to meet it, as, for instance, in the Glossary to Scott's edition of Sir Tristram.

* The tendency of modern English to the more extended use of the weak inflection is happily so powerful, that unless it be checked by increased familiarity with our earlier literature, it is not improbable that the strong declensions and conjugations will disappear altogether. A comparison of the modern poets with Chaucer, and even much later writers, will show that hundreds

But whatever may be thought of the relative antiquity of the forms, the notion on which the new nomenclature rests is a fanciful one, and it is unfortunate that terms so inappropriate should have been sanctioned by so high authority, and so generally adopted by grammarians. Had the two modes been called, respectively, old and new, the names would have expressed a historical fact, or at least a probable theory, but it would be easy to assign as sound and as obvious reasons for designating the two classes of variation by ascribing to them color or weight, and for calling them black and white, or heavy and light, as those alleged for the use of the terms strong and weak. It certainly could not have been difficult to invent appellations more appropriate in character, and it is to be regretted that the difficulties of grammatical science should be augmented by increasing the number of fallacious terms in its vocabulary.

Various theories have been suggested to explain the origin of the changes of form in different classes of words in inflected languages. These I cannot here discuss or even detail. It must suffice to observe that, with respect to the strong inflections, or those consisting in a letter-change, as, present *run*, past *ran*, singular *man*, plural *men*, it is at least a plausible supposition, that they originated in different pronunciations of the same word in different local dialects, the respective pronunciations each assuming a distinct significance, as the dialects melted into one speech. As to the weak inflections, those consisting in the addition of vocal elements, it has been conjectured that these elements were in all cases originally pronouns, auxiliaries or particles which have coalesced with the verb or other root. In general the inflections were adopted so early, and the pronouns or other absorbed words have become so much modified, that they can no longer be recognized in their combination with the inflected word. But there

of verbs formerly-inflected with the letter-change, are now conjugated by augmentation. Every new English dictionary diminishes the number of *irregular* verbs. Webster tells us that *swollen*, as the participle of *swell*, is now nearly obsolete. Popular speech, however, still preserves this form, as well as many other genuine old preterites and participles, which are no longer employed in written English. Even *heat*, (pronounced *hêt*.) now a gross vulgarism, occurs as the participle of *to heat*, as late as the beginning of the seventeenth century. See Holland's *Pliny*, II., 393, and *Daniel* III., 19, in the original edition of the standard translation of the Bible.

are some instances where we possess historical evidence of such a coalescence. The future of the verb in all the Romance languages is a case of this sort. Thus *amaré*, *amarás*, *amará*, the future of the Spanish verb *amar*, is simply *amar he*, I have to love; *amar has*, thou hast to love; *amar ha*, he has to love.* In the closely allied Portuguese, the constituents of the future may still be used separately, and even an oblique case inserted between them; as *dar-lhe-hei*, I will give him, *agastar-se-ha*, he will be angry. This was also common in old Castilian, and we find in Beuter such combinations as *castigarosemos*, evidently *os hemos de castigar*, we will punish you. The formation of many of the other tenses may readily be traced in the older literature of other Peninsular dialects. Thus we find in the Catalan of King Jaume,† the first person plural of the conditional, with an oblique case, here a dative, inserted; *nos donar los niem ço q valien*, we would pay them for them [the horses] what they were worth.

There is a more interesting example of a newly formed inflection in languages cognate with our own, and I shall point out other remarkable instances of a tendency in the same direction, in discussing the Old-English inflections.‡ The Icelandic has a reflective form of the verb, used also as a passive, the characteristic

* The Mosso-Gothic verb *haban*, to have, was used as a *future* auxiliary, not as a *past*. Thus, in John xii. 26: "*jah þarei im ik, þaruh sa andbahts meins visan habaiþ*," and where I am, there my servant shall be. And when used in the past tense, it still involved the future corresponding to the *would* and *should* of the English Bible in a similar construction, as in John vi. 6: "*iþ silba vissa, þatei habaida taujan*," for he himself knew what he *would* do; and John vi. 71: "*Quaþuh þan þana iudan seimonis iskariotu sa auk habaida ina galevjan*." He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon; for he it was that *should* betray him.

† *Conquesta de Valencia por lo serenissim e catholich princep dō Jaume*, Valencia, 1515.

In the Chronicle of Don Pero Nifo, p. 56, we find the complicated combination, *facernos la han dejar*, *they will make us abandon it*.

The compound tenses were sometimes used in Italian down to the end of the fifteenth century. Savonarola generally employs the inflected future, but in a sermon delivered "adi VIII. di giugno, m.cccc.lxxxv," p. 12, he has: "*e dicoti che se idio ha premiare huomini almondo ha premiare gli christiani*," etc.

‡ See Lecture xviii.

of which is the consonantal ending *st* or *z*: thus the active infinitive *at kalla*, to call, makes the reflective *kallast* or *kallaz*. This was anciently written *se* or *sk* instead of *st*, and there is no doubt that it was originally simply a contraction of the reflective pronoun *sik*, corresponding to our *self*, or more exactly to the French reflective *se*, so that *at kallast* was equivalent to, *to call one's self*, or the French *s'appeler*. The form in question was at first purely reflective. It gradually assumed a passive force, and there are a few instances of its employment as such by classic writers in the best ages of that literature.* In modern Swedish and Danish, it is a true passive. I dwell upon this philological fact the more, because it is one of the few cases where we can show the origin of an inflection, and it is also specially interesting as an instance of the recent development of a passive conjugation in a language belonging to a family, which, in common with most modern European tongues, has rejected the passive form altogether.† Although the theories I have mentioned serve to furnish an explanation of many cases of both weak and strong inflection, there are numerous flectional phenomena which they fail to account for. We must seek the rationale of these in more recondite principles, or, in the present state of philological knowledge, confess our inability to propose a solution, and we are sometimes tempted to maintain with Becker, that language, as an organism, has its laws of development and growth, by virtue of which the addition of vocal elements to the root is as purely a natural germination as the sprouting of a bud at the end of a stem or in the axilla of a leaf. No theory of agglutina-

* *Elgi munu ver þat gera, segir Skarpheðinn þviat fást mun annat til eld kveykna, Njála, C. 126. Elgi muni fást slíkr kost; Fornmanna Sögur III. 78, Rauðgrani síst þá ekki. Forn. Sög. Norð. II., 244.*

† The want of passive forms is a serious defect in the grammar of modern European languages, and many of them have resorted to singular devices to supply their place. Thus in Italian, "*da dare a mutuo lire dieci mila mediante ipoteca mora ed interesse concertandi.*" Newspaper Advertisement.

"I monumenti onde qui si tratta furono cominciati a scoprirsi nel 1848, * * una forma che ne furono potuti raccogliere parecchi," etc. Newspaper Article.

In old Spanish, *pagadero* (sometimes *pagador* and *haeceder*), and in old Catalan, *pagador*, were used with a gerundial and passive signification.

tion or coalescence will explain the general resemblance of the genitive singular to the nominative plural in English nouns, and the like coincidence between the same cases in the masculine and feminine genders of Latin substantives and adjectives. The characteristic endings of the genders, and the identity of form between the nominative, accusative, and vocative cases in the neuter gender of adjectives and substantives in both Greek and Latin are peculiarities of an equally obscure character.* Linguistics, as a

* Archbishop Whately makes the following suggestion in his annotation on Lord Bacon's sixteenth essay :

“In that phenomenon in language, that both in the Greek and Latin, nouns of the neuter gender, *denoting things*, invariably had the *nominative* and the *accusative* the same, or rather had an accusative only, employed as a nominative when required,—may there not be traced an indistinct consciousness of the persuasion that a mere *thing* is not capable of being an agent, which a *person* only can really be ; and that the possession of power, strictly so called, by physical causes, is not conceivable, or their capacity to maintain, any more than to produce at first, the system of the universe ?—whose continued existence, as well as its origin, seems to depend on the continued operation of the great Creator. May there not be in this an admission that the laws of nature presuppose an agent, and are incapable of being the cause of their own observance ?”

It is with diffidence that I venture any criticism on so profound a thinker and so accurate a writer as the distinguished scholar from whom I quote, but it appears to me that this view of the case supposes grammatical gender to be essentially indicative of sex, that sex is a necessary attribute of all personality, including that of the Deity, and that want of sex distinguishes the *thing* from the *person*. The Greeks as well as the Latins, generally at least, employed gender as a mere grammatical sign, for the names of thousands of *things* in both languages, are masculine and feminine, and on the other hand *beings* are in very many cases designated by words of the neuter gender. The words of this latter class, it is true, are generally derivatives, diminutives, and the like, but I am aware of no reason to suppose that in any stage of the Greek or Latin, whatever may have been the case in the older tongues from which they are derived, the masculine and feminine forms alone were capable of expressing personality. The neuter adjective, τὸ θεῖον is used absolutely for the Divine Being or Essence, by Herodotus and by Æschylus. The chorus in the Agamemnon applies it to the inspiration of the Divinity.

1088, XO. χρήσειν εἶκεν ἄμφι τῶν ἀντῆς κακῶν,
μένει τὸ θεῖον δουλίᾳ παρὸν φρενί;

and it occurs in the sense of Divine control in the Choephoroi, v. 956,

κρατεῖται πως τὸ θεῖον παρὰ τὸ μῆ
ὑπουργεῖν κακοῖς.

As a proof that the Latin grammarians did not attach the notion of sexuality

science, is still in its infancy, and its accumulation of facts is but just begun. We shall doubtless hereafter penetrate much deeper into the mysteries of language, but yet we must resign ourselves to the conclusion, that speech, like other branches of human inquiry, will be found to have its ultimate facts, the detection of whose causative principles is beyond our reach.

to grammatical gender, see Varro, quoted in Andrews under *genus*. The use of *genus* instead of *sexus* shows this.

Pellissier, in his *La Langue Française*, p. 153, says: "Le genre neutre disparaît dans le vieux français, sans grand préjudice littéraire et avec un grand avantage de précision et de simplicité pour la pratique."

In German *Männchen* is used for the *male*, and *Weibchen* for the *female* of the lower animals.

LECTURE XVI.

GRAMMATICAL INFLECTIONS.

II.

THE general principle which the philological facts stated in the last lecture serve to illustrate, is, that in fully inflected languages like the Latin, the grammatical relations, as well as many other conditions of words, are indicated by their form; in languages with few inflections, like English, by their positions in the period, and by the aid of certain small words called auxiliaries and particles, themselves insignificant, but serving to point out the connection between other words. In the proposition which was taken as an example, *sheep fear man*, *oves timent hominem*, the English words were each employed in the simplest form in which they exist in the language, without any variation for case, number, or person, whereas in the corresponding Latin phrase, every word was varied from the radical, or inflected, according to its grammatical relations to other words in the period. Hence, it will be seen that for determining the relations between the constituents of a Latin period, the attention is first drawn to the inflected syllables of the words, and only secondarily to their import. These syllables may be called the mechanical part of grammar, because, though they probably once had an intelligible significance in themselves, yet that had been lost before Roman literature had a being, and so far back as we can trace the language, they were always, as they now are, mere signs of external relations and accidental conditions of the words to which they are applied. When the first inflected word in a Latin sentence is uttered, its relations to the entire proposition are approximately known by its ending, its ear-mark; and the mind of the listener is next occupied in sorting out of the words that follow, another, whose termination tallies with that of the first; the process is re-

peated with the second, and so on to the end of the period, the sense being often absolutely suspended until you arrive at the key-word, which may be the last in the whole sentence. We may illustrate the mental process thus gone through, by imagining the words composing an English sentence to be numbered one, two, three, and so on, but to be pronounced or written promiscuously, without any regard to the English rules of position and succession. Let it be agreed that the nominative, or subject of the verb, shall be marked *one*, the verb *two*, and the objective case, or object of the verb, *three*. Thus, William 1, struck 2, Peter 3. It is evident that if we once become perfectly familiar with the application of the numbers, so that *one* instantly suggests to us the grammatical notion of the subject or nominative, *two* that of the verb, and *three* that of the object or objective, the numeral being in every case the sign of the grammatical category, the position of the words becomes unimportant, and it is indifferent whether I say William 1, struck 2, Peter 3, or Peter 3, struck 2, William 1. The subject, the verb, and the object remain the same in both forms, and the meaning of course must be the same. English-speaking persons, in practising such lessons, would at first, no doubt, mentally rearrange the period, by placing the words in the order of their numbers, according to the law of English syntax, just as we do in construing or beginning to read a foreign language with a syntactical system different from our own. This, in long sentences, would be very inconvenient, because the words and their numbers must be retained in the memory until the sentence is completely spoken or read through, and then arranged afterwards; but practice of this sort would be found a useful grammatical exercise, and at the same time would facilitate the comprehension of the syntactical principles of languages, where the meaning of the period is not determined by position. This method of illustrating the principles of syntactical arrangement may seem fanciful, but nevertheless numbers have been employed by very high English authority, in actual literary composition, as a means of marking grammatical relation. Sir Philip Sidney, in the third book of the *Arcadia*, introduces a sonnet "with some art curiously written," in which the words are arranged chiefly according to metrical convenience; but their relations indicated by numbers printed over each word. There is, however, a difference

between his system of numeration and that which I have used in the example just given. He applies the *same* number to all the words composing each separate member of the period, because, in a long proposition containing many members, the numbers would be difficult to retain, if running on consecutively. Thus, the nominative, the verb, the objective, and the adverbial phrase of qualification, composing the first member, are all marked *one*; the same elements of the second member all marked *two*, and so of the rest. The sonnet is as follows:

¹ ² ³ ¹ ¹ ² ³
 Vertue, beautie, and speech, did strike, wound, charme,
¹ ² ³ ¹ ² ³
 My heart, eyes, cares, with wonder, love, delight,
¹ ² ³ ¹ ² ³
 First, second, last, did binde, enforce, and arme
¹ ² ³ ¹ ² ³
 His works, shews, suits, with wit, grace, and vows' might.

¹ ² ³ ¹ ² ³
 Thus honour, hking, trust, much, farre, and deepe,
¹ ² ³ ¹ ² ³
 Held, pierc't, posses't, my judgment, sense and will,
¹ ² ³ ¹ ² ³
 Till wrong, contempt, deceit, did grow, steale, cresse,
¹ ² ³ ¹ ² ³
 Bands, favour, faith, to breake, defle, and kill.

¹ ³ ³ ¹ ² ³
 Then griefe, unkindnesse, prooffe, tooke, kindled, thought,
¹ ² ³ ¹ ² ³
 Well grounded, noble, due, spite, rage, disdain,
¹ ² ³ ¹ ² ³
 But, ah, alas, (in vaine) my minde, sight, thought,
¹ ² ³ ¹ ² ³
 Doth him, his face, his words, leave, shun, refraine.

¹ ² ³ ¹ ² ³
 For no thing, time, nor place, can loose, quench, ease,
¹ ² ³ ¹ ² ³
 Mine owne, embraced, sought, knot, fire, disease.

The first four verses transposed according to the rules of English syntax would read thus:

¹ ¹ ¹ ¹
 1 Vertue did strike my heart with wonder,
² ² ² ²
 2 Beautie " wound " eyes " love,
³ ³ ³ ³
 3 And speech " charme " cares " delight.

which will then be equivalent to *one* in the numeral notation; the third person singular of the past tense of active verbs shall end in the syllable *-it*, which will correspond to number *two*; and the objective shall terminate in the syllable *-um*, answering to *three*. This would in fact be the Latin system, except that there is a greater variety of Latin endings than those I have mentioned. The terminations here answer the same purpose as the numbers, and it is plain that the order of the words in the period becomes grammatically indifferent:

Gulielm us percussit Petrum,
 Gulielm us Petrum percussit,
 Petrum percussit Gulielm us,
 Petrum Gulielm us percussit,
 Percussit Gulielm us Petrum,
 Percussit Petrum Gulielm us,

all being equally clear, and all meaning the same thing. While therefore this simple phrase admits of but one arrangement in English, the Latin syntax allows half a dozen, all equally unequivocal in meaning.

Every Latin verb has numerous terminations, each of which indicates whether the action expressed by it is past, present, or future, whether its subject is singular or plural, and whether it is in the first, second, or third person. Every noun has several terminations, each of which determines its case, nominative, genitive, (possessive,) and dative, accusative or ablative, (objective,) and the like, its number, and generally also its gender. Every adjective has many endings, each of which denotes the same accidents as those of the noun. In many instances, the endings of the noun and adjective indicative of case, number, and gender, are the same in both classes of words; in others, they are different, but whether like or unlike, they, and those of the verb also, correspond to each other, so that when the forms are once thoroughly mastered, it is in general easy to decide, by the terminations alone, without reference to position, to what noun a particular adjective belongs, and what are the relations between the noun and the verb. Hence, in English, the form determines little, the position much; in Latin, the relative importance of the two conditions is reversed, and, comparatively speaking, order is

nothing, form is everything. The Latins could employ foreign names or other words, only by clipping or stretching them to their own standard, and not only conforming them to their orthoepy, but to their syntax also. Accordingly, the Celtic, Teutonic, and other barbarous common and proper nouns, which occur so often in Roman history, are so much disfigured by changes in the radical combinations of letters, and especially in their characteristic terminations, that it is difficult to detect their original elements, and they aid us little in discovering the forms which marked the non-Roman dialects of those periods. The modern writers of the sixteenth century—a period when the European languages were little studied out of their native territory—resorted to Latin as a means of communication, whenever they wished to make themselves understood beyond the limits of their respective countries, and the rigid syntax of that language compelled them to perform similar operations on the modern names which they introduced into their writings. The historian de Thou, or Thuanus, as he called himself, Latinized the names of his personages in so strange a fashion that, to follow him, one must know not only the inflections, but the etymology, both of the Latin and of the modern languages to which these names belong. Thus the French family name *Entraigues*, etymologically, *entre les aigues*, (*aigues* being an old form for *eaux*, waters,) and meaning *between-the-waters*, is, for the convenience of declension, converted into *Interamnās*, a Latin form, of corresponding etymology, and in the same way *Du Bois* became *Sylvius*. The native name of the celebrated Erasmus was *Gheraerd Gheraerds*. The root of *Gheraerd* is a verb signifying to desire, but the name was very repugnant to Roman orthography and syntax, and the great scholar Latinized his prenominal into *Desiderius*, and Græcized his surname into *Erasmus*, both signifying the same thing. In like manner, the literary name of the Reformer *Melanchthon* is a translation of the German *Schwarzerde*, or *Blackearth*, and that of *Oecolampadius* is a Greek version of his German family appellation, *Hausschein*.*

* Bolton, in his *Hypercritica*, (Haslewood's Collection, II. 252,) says: "In this fine and meer schoolish folly, after that, George Buchanan is often taken: not without casting his reader into obscurity. For in his histories, where he

But to return: From what has been said of the structure of the Latin, as compared with that of the English period, it is obvious that the analysis to which a proposition is subjected in the mind of the listener, is conducted by very different processes in Latin and English. In the English sentence, the proportion of words whose form fixes their grammatical category is too small to serve as a guide to the meaning. The logical relations must first be determined, and the syntactical relations inferred from them. In Latin, on the contrary, you first, so to speak, spell out the syntax, and thence infer the sense of the period. In other words, to parse an English sentence, you must first understand it; to understand a Latin period, you must first parse it. And in this predominance of the formal over the logical lies the exceeding value of Latin as a grammatical discipline—not as a necessary means of comprehending or using our own tongue—but as a universal key to all language, a general type of comparison whereby to try all other modes of human speech.

The English student who has mastered Latin may be assured, that he has thereby learned one-half of what he has to learn in acquiring any Continental language. The thorough comprehension of this one syntax has stored his mind, once for all, with linguistic principles of general application, which, without this study, must be acquired over again, in the shape of independent concrete facts, with every new language he commences. Latin syntax, in fact, embraces and typifies all the rest; and he who possesses himself of it, as a preliminary to varied linguistic attainment and research, will have made a preparation analogous to that of the naturalist, who familiarizes himself with the scientific classification and nomenclature of the study he pursues, by the critical study of some perfectly organized type, before he attempts to investigate the characteristics of inferior species.

An important advantage of a positional and auxiliary over a flecational syntax, is that the chances of grammatical error are

speaketh of one Wischart, so little was his ear able to brook the name, as that, translating the sense thereof into Greek, of Wischart comes forth unto us So PHOCARDIUS." The Fardle of Factions gives us the converse of this practice, and calls the historian *Tacitus*, Cornelius the *stille*. "For Cornelius the *stille*, in his firste booke of his yerely exploitces, called in Latine *Annales*," &c., &c., chap. liiii., S. iii., edition of 1555; reprint of 1812, p. 812.

diminished in about the same proportion as the number of forms is reduced, and, accordingly, we observe that the mistakes of bad speakers in English are never in the way of position, not often in particles or auxiliaries, but almost uniformly in the right employment of inflections, such as the use of the singular verb with a plural noun, the confounding of the preterite with the past participle, or the employment of the strong inflection for the weak, or the weak for the strong. The double system of conjugation in our verbs, that with the letter-change and that by augmentation, is a fertile source of blunders, not only with children, but with older persons; and for want of that particular exercise, our Anglican memories are so little retentive of forms, that even distinguished writers are sometimes convicted of grave transgressions in accident.*

Inflected languages have an important advantage over those whose words are invariable, in their greater freedom from equivocation.† In a perfect inflected grammar, in a system where, for instance, the forms of the genders and cases of nouns, adjectives, articles, and pronouns, should be so varied that no single ending could be used in different connections, or for different purposes; where the distinctions of number, person, mood, tense, and condition, in the verbs, should have each its appropriate and exclusive form; and where the rules of verbal and prepositional regimen should be uniform and without exception; in such a

*I noticed in the last lecture the confusion between the causative forms to *fell*, to *lay*, to *set*, and their respective simple verbs *fall*, *lie*, and *sit*; but almost all verbs with the strong inflection are subject to erroneous conjugation, especially if the preterite and past participle differ from each other as well as from the indicative present. The verbs to *go* and to *see* are particularly unlucky in the treatment they receive. *Had went* is very often heard from ignorant persons, and I have known a gentleman in an important station in public life, a close personal and political friend of an American Senator afterwards Chief Magistrate of the United States, who often prefaced confidential explanations of his votes by saying: "I have *sawed* Mr. B * * * this morning, and he said," &c., &c.

†In a previous lecture, I have alluded to the vagueness and mistiness of Latin vocables as being in a measure compensated by its inflections and structure. As marked instances of this vagueness of meaning in individual words—a vagueness in some cases reaching not only to equivocation but to actual contradiction—I would refer to *ratio*, *honestus*, *hospes*, *sinister* as applied to the auspices, etc.

system, the meaning of an author might be obscure from profoundness of thought, or vague from the indefiniteness of the vocabulary, but it could hardly be equivocal. The passages in classic authors where either one of two meanings is, grammatically speaking, equally probable, are not very numerous, and where they actually occur, it usually arises from neglecting the inflectional, and employing a simpler construction, or from the fact that one inflection is obliged to serve for more than one purpose. In the illustration just used, I showed that the relative positions of the nominative and the objective were indifferent in Latin; both might follow the verb, both might precede it, the nominative might go before and the objective after, as in English, or the direct contrary; *Gulielmus Petrum percussit*, in the order nominative, objective, verb, being just as clear and unequivocal as when the objective follows the verb. We have in English a remarkable construction, borrowed probably from the Latin, by which, in a dependent proposition, the objective with the infinitive is put for the nominative with a finite verb. Thus, "I think him to be a man of talents," instead of "I think that he is a man of talents." Now, awkward as this is, its meaning is perfectly unequivocal. The Greeks and the Latins employed the same form, but much more extensively, and by no means with the infinitive of neuter verbs alone, as *to be*, and the like, but with active or transitive verbs, which themselves took and governed another objective or accusative.* This is one of the cases where a departure from general syntactical principles may produce an uncertainty of meaning. When Pyrrhus consulted the oracle as to the result of his meditated war with Rome, the reply was, "I declare you, O Pyrrhus, the Romans to be able to conquer!" Now in Greek and Latin, as we have said, there was no rule of position requiring the objective to follow the verb which governed it, and it was therefore doubtful whether the oracle meant, "I declare you to be able to conquer the Romans," or, "I declare the Romans to be able to conquer you."

* We find, in early English, examples of the objective before other infinitives than that of the substantive verb. Thus, in Genesis xxxvii. 7, older Wycliffite version: "I wenede vs to bynden hondfullis in the feelde, and myn hondful as to ryse." The modern construction, "I saw him go," and the like, is not an analogous form, but of a different origin.

In English, on the other hand, so much depends on position, and the possible varieties of position between two logically connected words are so many, that it is often extremely difficult to frame a long sentence, where it shall not be grammatically uncertain to which of two or three subjects or antecedents a predicate or relative belongs. Hence, we are continually driven to turn from the dead letter to the living thought, to project ourselves into the mind of the author, in order to determine the grammatical connection of his words; to divine his special meaning from the general tenor of his discourse, rather than to infer it from his syntax. Of all English writers, Spenser shows himself most independent of the laws of position. He disregards altogether the common grammatical rule of referring the relative to the last antecedent, and trusts entirely to the sagacity of the reader to detect the *who* in the multitude of *hes* and *shes* that go before it.* Apart from the point of equivocation, which does not often create any real logical difficulty in comprehending an author, however much we may be embarrassed in parsing him, I do not think that, with respect to precision of expression, or the nice discrimination of delicate distinctions of thought and shades of sentiment, inflected languages have any advantage. These qualities of speech are independent of grammatical form. They are determined by the inherent expressiveness of individual words, far more than by their syntactical relations, and it would be difficult to produce an example of a subtlety of thought expressible by inflection, which could not be conveyed with equal precision and certainty, by proper uninflected words with the aid of particles and auxiliaries.†

* The description of the combat between Sir Guyon and Pyrochles, in Canto XI., book I., of the *Fæerie Queene*, is a characteristic example of this grammatical confusion.

† In Danish the *possessive case* of the personal pronoun (*hans, hendes*) is distinguished from the *possessive pronoun* (*sin*), so that the embarrassment often arising in English from the confusion of these categories is avoided, as it was in ancient Latin.

† Doubtless *habuissém* is a more elegant and convenient form than *I might, could, would, or should-have-had*, which grammars give as its equivalents, but our varieties of expression, awkward as they are, more than compensate us, by their distinctions of meaning, for the simplicity of the one word, which the Romans used for so many. Fontenelle said: "Si je recommençais la vie, je ferois tout ce que j'ai fait." Did he mean I *would* do, or I *should* do? or did he, and do others using like inflections, syncretize the two thoughts in one ex

Emphasis itself may often be made to serve as an auxiliary. Take, for example, the phrase: "Why will ye die?" Here we may have three very distinct shades, according to the reading, "*Why will ye die?*" or "*Why will ye die!*" or again, "*Why will ye die?*"*

Fixedness of position is an essential quality of syntax in languages where grammatical relations are not determined by inflection, because position only can indicate the relation between a given word, and those with which it is connected by particles and auxiliaries.

But though the position of words must be a fixed one, yet it does not necessarily follow the natural order of thought in any given case, but may be entirely independent of logical sequence, and of course arbitrary. Of this there are numerous examples in English. Except when we depart from the idiom of the language, by poetic or rhetorical license, we must place first, the subject, then the copula or predicate verb, and then the object, as, for example, *William struck Peter*, *William* being the subject or agent, *struck* the verb, *Peter* the object or sufferer. Now, this may be the logical order of thought, or it may not, according to circumstances, but nevertheless the law of position in English is inflexi-

pression? In such cases, the context, or the circumstances under which the words were spoken, must be called in to decide. In English, the auxiliary determines the sense. In some cases our English auxiliary *will* has the full force of an independent word. We all feel that *I will not*, is much stronger than *je ne veux pas*.

The office of verbal inflections is to express qualified and conditioned, rather than complex, thought. The difficulty of comprehending an idea, or of expressing it in any language with a reasonably copious vocabulary, does not lie in its conditions, or even in its complexity, but is proportioned to its subtlety, and what Browne calls its *elementarity*. So long as we can separate from the radical conception the qualifications and combinations accidental to it, we can readily express those qualifications and combinations by auxiliary or other subordinate forms. In thought and in language, so far as decomposition is practicable, comprehension and expression are easy, but, as in chemistry considered as a sensuous manifestation of immaterial force, where analysis ends, there mystery begins.

* Demosthenes is said on one occasion to have emphasized the word *μισθωτός* (hiring) by purposely misplacing the accent, and pronouncing it, *μισθώτος*. The audience, in correcting his mispronunciation, repeated the epithet with the proper accent. "Yes," exclaimed the orator, "you agree with me—he is a *μισθωτός*."

ble. If, for example, the words just supposed are uttered in reply to the question, *Who* struck Peter? then the grammatical rule and the logical order of arrangement coincide, inasmuch as the personality of the agent would first suggest itself to the respondent. But had the question been, *Whom* did William strike? it is equally clear that the name of the object, *Peter*, would first rise in the mind, and logically should be first expressed by the lips. So had it been asked, *What* did William *do* to Peter? the thought and word *struck* logically would, and grammatically should, take precedence. It is easy to imagine that, without any question put, circumstances may make first and most prominent in the mind of the speaker, either the subject, the predicate, or the object, and it is a most important convenience to him to be able to follow what, in the particular case, is the natural order of thought. In inflected languages there is little difficulty in following this order, inasmuch as the form of every word indicates with certainty its grammatical case.*

* In discussions upon the relations between the logical order of thought and the syntactical succession of words, it has been sometimes assumed, and at other times argued, that we are to inquire into the construction of the proposition as abstracted from all circumstances which might affect the order of thought and expression in the mind of either speaker or hearer. This is to suppose a case which, in articulate or written language cannot exist, and in point of fact seldom, if ever, does exist in purely intellectual processes. No man speaks or writes without a motive, and that motive originates in circumstances that necessarily modify the order in which thought rises to the mind, and words to the lips or pen.

We know language only in its concrete form, and the grammatical and philological question always is: What is the order of thought under such or such circumstances? The rhetorical question is still more complicated: How am I, under the circumstances special to *me*, to arrange my words, that they may produce the right impression on the mind or heart of my hearer under the circumstances that are operating on *him*? This, indeed, is purely a matter of *art*, and belongs as little to philology as do metaphysical inquiries into the abstract laws of thought. Men are usually so much under the control of subjective emotion that they utter their words without calculating their effect beforehand, and they habitually arrange them according to the syntactical laws of the language they are speaking, by a process which long practice has rendered mechanical and unconscious. The circumstances which affect the order of thought in an independent proposition, uttered not as a reply to a question, nor with any reference to the conditions peculiar to the person addressed, are too various even to admit of generalization or classification. An example or two must suffice. To take the proposition I have so often employed as an

It is obvious that the power of arranging the period at will—of always placing at the most conspicuous point the prominent word, the key-note of the emotion we seek to excite—is a logical and rhetorical advantage of the greatest moment. If no such motive of position exists, the speaker may consult the laws of euphonic sequence, or metrical convenience, and order his words in such succession of articulate sounds as falls most agreeably upon the ear. Accordingly, in languages which have this flexibility of structure, we observe that orators, when they would rouse the passions of their audience, arrange their periods so as to give to the emphatic words the most effective positions; when, on the contrary, they would soothe the minds, or allay the irritation of their hearers, they seek a flowing and melodious collocation of sounds, or sink words suggestive of offence by placing them in unemphatic parts of the sentence. Thus, to a certain extent, in these tongues, a speaker might accomplish by mere collocation what in others he must effect by selection, and, with the same words, he might frame a sentence which would excite the indignation of his audience, and another which, while communicating precisely the same fact, should, by making a different element prominent in the order of utterance, be received with little emotion. For the complete illustration of what I have been saying

illustration, William struck Peter. If we suppose Peter, as a son or relative, to be invested with special interest in the eyes of the speaker, and William to be comparatively a stranger, the name, as the representative of the personality of Peter, would be first in the order of thought, and in languages where, as in Latin, expression is free to conform to the thought, first in the order of words also. Hence the natural arrangement of the proposition would be: Peter [objective] struck William [nominative].

The order of thought and speech would be the same, if the action were reversed, and Peter were the agent, William the sufferer. Again, if the blow were a very severe one, the character of the act would be most prominent in the mind of the speaker, and the order of expression would be: struck Peter [objective] William [nominative]. In general, it may be said that the relative emphasis with which the different words composing a proposition are uttered, if it could be exactly measured, would serve as a guide to the place of the words in the logical order of succession, the most emphatic words coming first.

In many languages, the order of arrangement is inverted, or at least changed, in interrogative sentences. In others, interrogative pronouns, particles, or auxiliary verbal forms, very often serve to put the question independently of the order of the words. Among the great European tongues, the Italian is less bound to a fixed sequence in interrogative sentences than any other.

it would be necessary to resort to more of Greek and Latin quotation than would be appropriate, but classical scholars will find in those literatures many examples of great skill in ordering words with reference to effect. Demosthenes, in particular, exhibits consummate dexterity in this art. At his pleasure, he separates his lightning and his thunder by an interval that allows his hearer half to forget the threatened detonation, or he instantaneously follows up the dazzling flash with a pealing explosion, that stuns, prostrates, and crushes the stoutest opponent.

English poetry, and that of the highest character, is full of instances where the rhetoric has overpowered the grammar, and the poet has availed himself of what is called poetic license, to place his words in such order as to give them their best effect, without regard to the rigid rules of our obstinate syntax. Take, for example, this couplet from Byron's *Adieu* :

The night winds sigh, the breakers roar,
And shrieks the wild sea-mew.

Here the last line is far more effective than it would have been, if the nominative had preceded the verb :

The wild sea-mew shrieks.

In the first line, no such change of position was required in either member, because the nouns *wind* and *breakers* are of themselves suggestive of the sounds which belong to them, whereas form and power of flight are the ideas which most naturally couple themselves with the name of the bird. So, in *King Lear* :

Such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain I never
Remember to have heard !

Here the force of the passage would have been much weakened by following the rule of placing the objective after the verb :

I never remember to have heard such bursts of thunder, &c.

And in *Samuel* :

Nabal is his name, and folly is with him,

is far more forcible to those who know that the name Nabal means a fool, than if the usual order, his name is Nabal, had been observed; Fool is his name, and folly is with him, than, His name is fool, and folly is with him. So, in Jacob's reply to Pharaoh, the shortness and emptiness of human life are more strikingly expressed by the phrase: "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been," than by the more familiar English arrangement of the same words.

It was not for reasons of metrical convenience, but from a deep knowledge of the laws of thought, that, in announcing the argument of his great epic, Milton enumerates the several branches of the subject in a dependent form, before he introduces the comparatively insignificant governing verb, which does not appear till the sixth line of the introductory invocation:

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing Heavenly Muse, &c.

Here the whole great drama, in its successive scenes, man's first sin, its consequences temporal and spiritual, his redemption by Christ and final salvation, is brought before us at once in all its majesty, weakened by no tame conventionalities of introduction.

The Anglo-Saxon, although its original variety of inflection had been greatly reduced before the date of its most flourishing literature, still retained a good deal of freedom of collocation. The Anglo-Saxon version of the New Testament generally follows its original in the order of its syntax, and early English writers employed, in prose at least, greater liberty of position than is now practised. It is an interesting observation, that the modern Italian has inherited from its Latin mother a great freedom of periodic arrangement, though with a marked inferiority in power of inflection. It has an immense advantage over the French, in variety of admissible collocations of words in a given sentence, as well as in the greater number of allied forms of expression. The French inflections, indeed, as has been before observed, are much less complicated and complete to the ear than

to the eye; and if we strip the accidene of the flecional syllables or letters which in the spoken tongue are silent, the distinct variations in the forms of words are far fewer than they appear in the written language. But the difference between French and Italian in flexibility of syntax does not depend upon this circumstance alone, for Italian has nearly as great a superiority in liberty of syntactical order over the Spanish, which possesses full and distinctly marked inflections. The freedom of the Italian syntax is to be ascribed in part to the fact that it is, relatively speaking, both an aboriginal and, to a great extent, an unmixed tongue,* spoken by the descendants of those to whom the maternal Latin was native, and retaining the radical forms and grammatical capabilities of that language; whereas French and Spanish are strangers to the soil, corrupted by a large infusion of foreign ingredients, and spoken by nations alien in descent from those who employed the common source of both as their mother-tongue. The wretched servitude, under which Italy has for centuries alternately struggled and slumbered, has prevented the free employment of its language on such themes as to bring out fully its great capacities, and make it known to intellectual Europe as an intellectual speech; but its many-sidedness and catholicity of expression, its rhetorical facility of presenting a thought in so many different aspects, render it valuable as a linguistic study, independently of the claims of its literature.

In general it may be said, that in inflected languages, the point of view in which the subject presents itself to the mind of the speaker, is the determining principle of the collocation of words in periods; but at the same time, they allow such an arrangement as to enable the speaker to suit the structure of the sentence to the supposed condition of the mind of the hearer, or to the impression which he wishes to produce upon him. The natural order in which thought develops itself in the mind of one already cognizant of the facts, agitated with the emotion, or possessed of the conclusions which he wishes to communicate to another, is not by

* I mean that it was so considered by those who spoke it, as they did not and could not refer most derivative words to their radicals. Recent German linguistic science has taught us of the nineteenth century far more of Latin etymology than was known to the most learned Romans at the beginning of our era.

any means necessarily that which would be most readily intelligible to a mind ignorant of the facts, or most impressive to one intellectually or morally otherwise affected towards the subject. Hence the power of diversified arrangement of words in inflected languages is valuable, not merely because it permits a speaker to follow what is to *him* a logical order of sequence, but because a master of language, who knows the human heart also, may thereby accommodate the forms of his speech to the endless variety of characters, conditions, passions, and intelligences, of which our discordant humanity is made up.

There is another point which must not be overlooked. An inflected language, with periods compacted of words knit each to each in unbroken succession, is eminently favorable to continuity of thought. A parenthetical qualification interrupts the chain of discourse much less abruptly, if it is syntactically connected with the period, than if it is, as is usual in English, interjectionally thrown in. It is said to be one of the tests of a perfect style, that you cannot change, omit, or even transpose, a word in a period, without weakening or perverting the meaning of the author. Although this may be true of English, I do not think it by any means applicable to inflected languages like the Greek or Latin, so far at least as the order of words is concerned, for there seem to be many constructions in which position is not only grammatically, but logically and rhetorically, indifferent. In the rough draft of one of Plato's works, the first few words were written by way of experiment in half a dozen different arrangements, and the famous stanza in the Orlando Furioso of Ariosto, descriptive of a storm at sea,

Stendon le nubl un tenebroso velo, &c.,

is said to have been composed by the poet in ten times as many forms. Doubtless, in such a wide variety of sequences, there were some discoverable differences of meaning; but in the main, both the philosopher and the poet were aiming in all this nicety at a sensuous, as much as at an intellectual effect upon the reader, however logically important a particular succession of words may have been in other passages of their writings.

LECTURE XVII.

GRAMMATICAL INFLECTIONS.

III.

It is a remarkable fact that the modern languages known in literature are, perhaps without exception, poorer in grammatical inflections than the ancient tongues from which they are respectively derived; and that, consequently, the syntactical relations of important words are made to depend much more on auxiliaries, determinative particles, and position. In fact, the change in this respect is so great as to have given a new linguistic character to the tongues which now constitute the speech of civilized man. I alluded on a former occasion to a doctrine advanced by very eminent philologists, that grammatical structure is a surer test of linguistic affinity than comparison of vocabularies. But though this doctrine, as limited and understood by the ablest linguists, is true in its application to the primary distinctions between great classes of languages, as, for example, the Semitic and Indo-European; yet it properly relates to remote and generic, not specific affinities, and is not capable of such extension as to be of much practical value in comparing the mixed and derivative languages of Europe with those from which they are immediately descended.

We know, with historical certainty, that what are called the Romance languages, and their many local dialects, are derived from Italic speeches grouped under the convenient name of Latin, and known to us only through the literature of ancient Rome which is their common representative. But what coincidence of syntactical structure do we find between the Romance languages and the common mother of them all? The Italian resembles the Latin in independence of fixed laws of periodic arrangement, but here the grammatical likeness ends, and if we apply that test alone, it would be quite as easy to make out a linguistic affinity

between Italian and Greek as between Italian and Latin. Latin has no article, definite or indefinite; its noun, adjective, pronoun, and participle have not only the distinction of number, but of three genders also, and a full system of inflected cases; its adjectives admit of degrees of comparison; and its verbs have a passive voice. Italian, on the contrary, has two articles; its nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and participles, though varied for number, have no distinction of case; its adjectives are compared only by the aid of particles, *issimo* being only an intensive; it has no neuter gender, and its verbs are without a passive voice. All this is true also of Spanish,* Portuguese, and French. These diversities of grammar would have been held to disprove a linguistic relationship between Latin and its descendants, were not such relationship established both by identity of vocabulary and by positive historical evidence. So, with respect to Greek, we know that more closely literal, more exactly word-for-word translations, (and this is certainly one of the best tests of grammatical resemblance,) can be made from it into German, than into any of the languages of Southern Europe, which, through the Latin, are more nearly related to it. Another fact bearing on this same question is, that the points of syntactical structure or general grammar, in which the modern languages of Southern and South-eastern Europe approach each other most closely, are just those in which they least resemble the Latin and the ancient Greek, from which they are respectively derived; and therefore, in spite of their diversity of origin, and their discrepancies of vocabulary and syntax, they must have been influenced by powerful common tendencies.

The general resemblance between the languages of modern Europe, in points where they differ from the grammar of Greek and Latin as exhibited in classical literature, is not a matter of obvious explanation. It has been maintained that the popular colloquial speech of ancient Greece and Rome, and especially the vulgar and rural dialects of both, differed widely from the written languages, and nearly approximated to the modern spoken tongues which represent them. The supposed resemblance be-

* The participial adjectives in *-or*, *-ora*, in Catalan and in some other Hispanic dialects, have a passive gerundial force.

tween ancient colloquial Greek and modern Romaic, between ancient colloquial Latin, or the rustic dialects, and modern Italian, is an extremely interesting and curious subject, and it has been at least made out that many forms in the two modern dialects, hitherto supposed to be recent corruptions, are really of a very early date; but to assume that those dialects are merely the popular speech of Athens and of Rome, would be to claim for them an immutability, a persistence of character, which is at variance with what observation teaches us is the inevitable law of all language, and, moreover, with what historical evidence proves as to successive changes in the very tongues in question. Modern Italian is divided into at least a score of clearly marked distinct dialects, and but few of the characteristic peculiarities of these can be traced to any ancient source. The differences between them, in point of vocabulary, seem to depend very much on the special extraneous influences to which the localities where they are spoken have been exposed; but with regard to their very wide diversities in inflection, in syntax, and in pronunciation, although the same influences have doubtless been active in producing them, yet it is very difficult to trace the relation between the cause and the effect. Disregarding relatively unimportant exceptions, the most general classification we can make of these dialects is into those with full, and those with meagre inflections. The northern dialects, those spoken in the provinces most subject to invasion by, and commixture with, unallied races, have usually the fewest inflections; those of southern Italy, on the contrary, where the population is more homogeneous, or where the mingling of races dates further back, are generally more fully inflected.*

Perhaps the most interesting linguistic fact connected with the transition from an inflectional and independent, to a positional and auxiliary, grammatical structure, is that in the latter condition of syntax, the radical forms, which had been buried

* All cultivated Italians read Latin as an antiquated form of their own language. The conversational dialect of Lombards, Romagnesi, and some other *non Toscani*, if less easy and graceful than that of the Tuscans, is more dignified and more classical. It is an interesting fact that Spanish tyranny in Lombardy and Austrian tyranny in Venetia have left few or no traces in the language of those provinces.

and almost lost in inflected and derivative words, are revived, and again employed in what we must suppose to be very near approximations to the earliest shape in which they existed as articulate words. There are many examples of this in the dialects of northern Italy, and those which occur in every sentence of modern French are perhaps even more striking. *Homme*, *femme*, *an*, *bon*, are not to be considered as either derivatives or corruptions of the Latin *homo*, *femina*, *annus*, *bonus*. They are simply the radicals, the true words, restored to their pristine integrity by rejecting the accidental changes which inflection has produced; for few linguistic inquirers doubt that the Latins said *hom*, *fem*, *an*, *bon*, before they said *homo*, *femina*, *annus*, *bonus*.*

It is a received theory among English, and pretty generally among Continental philologists, that modern languages are, not accidentally but essentially, and by virtue of some universal law of mutation, distinguished from ancient ones by greater simplicity of grammatical form. The doctrine, as stated by Latham, is, that—

1. The earlier the stage of a given language is, the greater the amount of its inflectional forms, and the converse.

2. As languages become modern, they substitute prepositions and auxiliaries for cases and tenses.

3. The amount of inflection is in the inverse proportion to the amount of prepositions and auxiliary verbs.

4. In the course of time languages drop their inflections, and substitute circumlocutions by means of prepositions, &c. The reverse never takes place.

It is obvious that the last three of these propositions are little more than repetitions, or rather specifications of the first, and

* In the return of words to their primitive forms, we have an evidence of the organic nature of language, but the law of persistence, change, and reversion is not the same in the word as in the plant or animal. The successive generations of the vegetable or the animated creature are identical in their characteristics, so long as the external conditions in which they live are constant; these characteristics change when the influential circumstances of the propagation and growth of the particular organism are changed; and when disturbing or abnormal causes cease to operate, the plant or the animal returns to the typical form. The word, on the other hand, invariably, if not normally, undergoes successive mutations under the same continuing conditions, and disturbing influences do not accelerate its divergence, but bring it back to its original type. See Lecture xii.

equally evident that the first, in the form put by our author, is untrue. That all languages which have been reduced to writing have thereafter tended to flectional simplification is undisputed, but no genetic theory of the origin of inflections has ever been proposed, which did not directly contradict the general proposition enunciated by Latham. All these theories suppose either an organic evolution of inflected from simple forms, or a coalescence of different parts of speech into single words, and of course, in every language, an "earlier stage" than that in which the inflections were fully developed. If Latham's doctrine were true, we should be driven to the conclusion that such forms as the Latin subjunctive pluperfect *habuissetis*, and the Greek *ἔβεβουλευμεθα*, were not agglutinate or derivative, but either primitive or preceded by still more complicated inflections. We should thus be compelled to believe that language was a thing, not of development and growth, but, in its most perfected form, a possession of primeval man, and that all subsequent changes were but corruptions. I mentioned in a former lecture several instances where the formation of new inflections in very modern times was matter of historical certainty. The list might easily have been increased, and, though we cannot positively show the mode of development of the whole modern conjugation of a Romance verb, and though some of the forms are undoubtedly mere corruptions of ancient inflections, and others, at present, quite inexplicable, yet the cases are very numerous where we have the strongest evidence that conjugations and declensions have arisen in very recent times, by processes precisely analogous to those which in the infancy of man produced them. It is obvious, then, that in the present state of our knowledge, we find no ground for the assumption of such a change in the constitution of the human mind, for it is nothing less, as Latham's broad propositions involve. We can assign probable reasons for linguistic changes, so far as change exists, without any such violent supposition, and it is far safer to confine ourselves to the statement of a philological fact common to a large class of languages, than to announce hypothetical propositions as laws embracing all human speech.

The languages of savages, never reduced to writing, and of many nations among whom literature is little diffused, are astonishingly complex and multifarious in their inflections; and as, for

the want of recorded monuments, researches into their past history are impossible, we can have no warrant whatever for saying, either that such languages are in a very early stage of existence, or that their structure is *less* complicated than it was at some previous period.

If we compare existing unwritten with written languages, and both with what we know of their history, we shall, I think, conclude that, in general, the process of flecional development and agglutination goes on, and the forms become more and more complicated, until the language is reduced to writing, and a literature is created. At this period the formation of new inflections is arrested, and the tendency thereafter is to simplification in form, increase of substance or vocabulary, and discrimination in signification; so that if a language adopts a written character at an early stage of its growth, it will be less complicated in its grammatical structure than if it exists only in a spoken form until a late period.

With respect to the modern tendency of written languages to simplification of form, there are two causes almost universal in their operation, which have not generally been sufficiently considered in their bearing on this particular point. These are foreign conquest, accompanied by the intermixture of a strange population with the native race, and the equally universal introduction of new religions by alien teachers. Although we cannot always specify the precise mode of operation of these transforming causes, yet they seem to me of themselves sufficient to have produced quite as great linguistic revolutions as we have witnessed in the speech of Europe, and indeed it is rather surprising that so much, than that so little, of the ancient tongues of Latium and Hellas yet exists in a recognizable form.

I have stated it on a former occasion as a generally verified fact, that in the case of the subjugation of a civilized, by a barbarian or a less numerous race, the native speech is adopted by the conquerors. •

How then would a given language probably be modified by becoming the organ of communication between foreign masters or teachers and their subjects or pupils? * We learn the vocabu-

* See Brachet, *Grammaire Historique de la Langue Francaise*, pp. 53, 54, 56, 147.

lary of another language readily, its grammatical inflections and phraseological combinations with infinite difficulty. While therefore conquerors and missionaries would soon acquire radicals enough to make themselves intelligible, they would slowly, if ever, master the complicated forms of a foreign speech. Their commanding position would give authority even to their imperfect dialect, and especially if they were, as at least the missionary almost universally would be, intellectually superior to the subject race, their mutilated inflections and foreign idioms, bearing the stamp of both physical and mental power and dignity, would become characteristics of elevated and refined speech, and sooner or later supersede the more complicated grammatical machinery of the native tongue. To these influences would be added others of a similar character, derived from the new commercial relations to which conquest usually gives birth, and thus while the vocabulary might remain comparatively unchanged, the formal characteristics of the syntax might undergo an almost total revolution. There are few countries of Europe, few of civilized Asia, whose languages have not been modified and accommodated to the convenience of strangers, by such causes as I have described, and it would be difficult if not impossible to find a written speech which has remained wholly exempt from their action. Although, then, we can undoubtedly perceive that in these latter ages of general intercommunion, all human speech is exposed to certain external influences of a universal character, we are not in possession of facts which authorize us to say, that there exists at the present day any inherent common tendency of language in either direction, and it is idle to speculate on conjectural causes for an unascertained phenomenon. No European language, perhaps I may say no tongue possessing a literature, has been so little exposed for the last eight hundred years to the influences of which I have spoken, as the Icelandic, and a comparison of this language, in its present form, with the Swedish and Danish—which, in the eleventh century, if not later, were identical with it—is instructive in reference to the point under consideration. Sweden, Norway, and Denmark have not been devastated by conquest, nor has there been any large admixture of foreign with the native blood; but to all alien influences, except those of violence, they have been much exposed, and the consequence has been, that while Icelandic has remained

comparatively unchanged, Swedish and Danish have been almost completely revolutionized, in every thing but the roots of their vocabularies, and in these there has been a very great infusion of foreign material. In this instance the difference must be ascribed, not to any inherent tendency towards simplification of structure, but to external causes, and therefore in this, the best existing test case, we find little support for the theory in question.

The countries composing the Roman Empire have been especially exposed to every conceivable cause and mode of linguistic corruption. We must not forget that the rural population of Italy was almost extirpated by the conscription and by civil discord, before the commencement of our era, and that the place of the Roman peasantry was supplied by Gallic, Teutonic, Hellenic, African, and Asiatic colonized soldiers, and prædial slaves, to none of whom was Latin a mother-tongue. The provinces were soon overrun, separated from the metropolitan seat of power, partially depopulated and re-peopled, split up into a multitude of petty principalities and nationalities, and finally reduced into an undistinguishable chaos, in which state they remained until the reign of Charlemagne restored western Christendom to a measure of light and order. The reconstruction of European society then commenced. There was an evident gravitation toward centres, a tendency to consolidation and the assimilation of discordant elements. The fragmentary jargons began to harmonize, coalesce, and form national or at least provincial dialects, and finally, by processes which, when better understood, will throw more light on the general history of language than almost any other source of instruction, the great internal divisions of the Gothic and Romance tongues were clearly established, and each became a special, well-marked, national idiom.*

Persons not familiar with the civil history of the Middle Ages,

* See Brachet, *Grammaire Historique de la Langue Française*, pp. 26-27. Though I cannot adopt all Brachet's conclusions as infallibly correct, yet I take pleasure in recommending his *Grammaire Historique* as the most learned and instructive work known to me on the history of the Modern Romance languages. I must, however, observe that I think he underrated the influence of classic Latin on the literary tongue of Modern Italy. It should be added that Brachet's *Dictionnaire Étymologique de la Langue Française* is also invaluable; but as, in general, he traces words only to their nearest source, it is not so satisfactory with regard to remoter derivations.

are generally not aware of the confusion of tongues which prevailed throughout Christendom as late as the beginning of the fourteenth century. The fine old Catalan chronicler, Ramon Muntaner, who lived at that period, and had extensive opportunities of observation in Europe and in Asia, testifies that small as were the numbers of his countrymen, yet no other one language was spoken by so many. "Yee will have marvaile," says he, "of what I shall telle you, but natheless, if yee marke well, yee shal finde that I telle you the trouthe; that is to saine, there be nowhere so moche folke that speketh one same tongue as of the Catalans. For in the reäume of Castille, there be many provinces, and everie of them useth his owne proper speche. Ye shalle finde the lyke diversity in Fraunce, in Englonde, in Almayne, and in all Rumelie; and in lykewise in thempiry of Constantinople, the Morea, and Vlaquie, and Natolie, and other marches, and it is even so with as manye other peoples as bee in the worlde. Now, some menne may bee abashed hereat, and wene it is but an olde wyfe's tale, but thinke what ye liste, wete ye wel, it is the veray trouthe."* The mysterious tenacity with which language clings to the soil, seems to be the great conservative force that prevented the total extinction of Latin in the countries where the wide political sway of Rome had planted it. Too much of like influence has been ascribed to the adoption of

* The translation of the passage cited in the text was made from memory and is too much epitomized. In the edition of 1563, folio XXIII. a, the passage is as follows: *Daltra part vos maranellarets du na cosa queus dire, empero si be ho cercats, axin trobarets, q̄ dun llen guatge sol de negunes gentz non son tantes com Cathalans, q̄ si volets dir Castellás, la dreta Castella poch dura, e poca es: quen Castella ha moltes Prouincies, q̄ caseu parla son lenguatge: e son axi departits com Cathalans, de Aragonesos. E si be Cathalans, e Aragonesos son tots de vn senyor, llengua llur es molt departida. E axi mateix trobarets en Franca, e en Anglaterra, e en Alemanyia, e par tota Romania, quels Grechs qui son del Emperador de Constantinoble son axi mateix moltes Prouincies: axi com de la Morea, e del Reynalme de Maçadonia, e del Reynalme del Natull, e di altres Prouincies moltes. Entre les quals ha aytants departiments de llur llenguatges, com ha de Cathalans a Aragonesos. E axi mateix ses de les altres Prouincies del mon, que hom diu que Tartres son molta gent, e non son: mas perço paren molts, es sotsmeten moltes nacions del mon, com james no trobarets Tartres qui facen res de ses mans, ans hostijen tostamps, e van ab llurs mullers, e ab llurs Infants, hostes, feyts. E axi podets vos pensar si los Cathalans feyen atre tal, si serien molt mes que ella.*

Latin as the language of the Romish church, and it is very doubtful whether that circumstance really had any very important influence in the development and form of the modern Romance dialects. To all the Romance tribes, Christianity was taught through Latin, and though Augustine advises the preacher to make some slight concessions to popular ignorance of language, yet there is little cause to believe that the jargons of the Italian, Gallic, and Spanish provinces were ever much used as a vehicle of religious instruction. Grammatical Latin was sufficiently intelligible for the purposes of the priesthood, in all those provinces when Christianity was established among them, and, once established, it was maintained by an authority that had more efficient means at its command than the persuasive accents of a maternal dialect. When, then, in the reign of Charlemagne, the Latin language was again cultivated for secular purposes, the classical literature of Rome made itself felt in modifying the spoken dialects which were struggling into recognized existence.

With the Gothic languages the case was quite otherwise. The missionary who goes armed with the cross, not with the sword, must use a speech intelligible to those whom he would convert. Charlemagne indeed made Christians by force, but the Gothic tribes generally were brought to Christianity by arguments and persuasions addressed to them by ministers speaking to every man in his own tongue. Hence the languages of the Gothic stock were employed in the service of religion at a *relatively* earlier period than those of Romance origin, and were modified accordingly. They all have grammatical peculiarities which seem repugnant to their general syntactical principles, and which they appear to have borrowed from the idiom of Greek or Latin works translated into them, or imitated by native authors, and hence in those languages we can often detect the influence of ecclesiastical Latin. The Romance dialects, on the contrary, did not venture to trespass on themes, to the discussion of which the sacred tongue of Rome was appropriated, and their training and formative influences were almost wholly of a secular character.

The influence of the causes of linguistic change to which I have alluded, was exhausted, or at least greatly weakened in its action, as soon as strong and stable governments were organized. Conservative forces now became predominant, and of these unques-

tionably the most important is the diffusion of a general taste for poetry. Poetic thought requires a certain dignity and elevation of diction inconsistent with the employment of trite, trivial, and especially vulgar and abbreviated expressions, and in spite of the theory and practice of Wordsworth, its dialect will always consist of a vocabulary in some degree less familiar than that of prose. The standard authors in prose and verse, especially in early stages of literature, are a little behind the language of their own period, because, among other reasons, before their works can have acquired such a diffusion and such an established popularity as to have entitled them to a permanently conspicuous place in the literature of a nation, a sufficient time usually elapses to produce some changes in the spoken tongue. Poetry makes a deeper impression than prose. Its forms address themselves more powerfully to the faculty of memory, and for this reason, as well as for its sententiousness, and its greater condensation and pungency of expression, it is more frequently quoted. Hence, a poem becomes less soon obsolete than a prose work of equal merit and even popularity, and of course it has a greater influence in keeping alive the dialect in which it is expressed. Poetry, considered as an art, is more essentially imitative than any branch of prose writing. Its means are much more restricted, its rules more arbitrary, its models more authoritative. In studying the art, therefore, the poet takes form and material together, and he who has imbibed the spirit of a Spenser or a Milton, can hardly fail unconsciously to adopt a Spenserian or a Miltonic diction.

But our present business is rather with the inflectional forms, than with the vocabulary or the grammatical structure of the language. Inflected forms, being more or less alike in each class of words, have a tendency to produce similarity of termination and, of course, rhyme. If, therefore, a word is so formed that by dropping an inflected syllable a convenient rhyme is lost, the inflection will be retained in poetry after it has begun to be obsolete in prose. So, if there are two forms of a given word, while, in the conversational and prose dialect, there is always a tendency to discard one of them, the poet will find in the necessities of rhyme, in the convenience of making a word at pleasure monosyllabic or polysyllabic, a half-foot, an iambus, or a dactyle, and in the advantage of repetition without monotony, reasons for retaining

both, and thus poetry is constantly checking the progress of the language towards a rigid simplification.

For instance, the present tendency of English is to reject the adjectival form in *n*, as *wooden*, *leathern*, and the like, and to employ a noun in place of an adjective to express the material of which any thing is made; but the multitude of verses in which the true adjective is employed, powerfully tends to prevent this ending from becoming altogether obsolete. Woodworth's fine song, 'The Old Oaken Bucket,' which has embalmed in undying verse so many of the most touching recollections of rural childhood, will preserve the more poetic form *oaken*, together with the memory of the almost obsolete implement it celebrates, through all dialectic changes, as long as English shall be a spoken tongue.

The influence of inflections upon the accentuation, and consequently the whole articulation of language, is a curious, and, so far as I am aware, nearly a new subject of inquiry. I shall have occasion to consider it more fully hereafter, but there are certain general principles which may be appropriately stated here. In languages varied by weak or augmentative inflections, the ending, which determines the grammatical relations of a word, must be distinctly articulated, in order that the category of the word may be known. To accomplish this, the principal accent must be carried forward towards the end of the word, so as to emphasize one of the variable syllables, or there must be a secondary accent upon the final syllable, unless this is prosodically long, and of course dwelt upon sufficiently to make it distinctly audible. Now, in languages with uninflected or little varied endings, the relations of the words being indicated by particles, auxiliaries, and position, the only syllable which requires to be made prominent by accent is the radical one, which generally lies near the beginning of the word, and the following syllables may be slurred over, with little danger of ambiguity. The grammatical determinatives, being independent words, and usually monosyllabic, are necessarily pronounced with some distinctness, and accordingly, if the radical syllables are made audible, the speaker is pretty certain to be understood. And this is more especially true where, as in the German and the English for instance, there is a strong tendency to inflection by the letter-change. In almost all cases where this change takes place, it occurs in a syllable which is radical and therefore

accented. Its distinct articulation makes the whole word intelligible, and we incline to suppress, or at least slight, all other grammatical characteristics, while, in languages inflected by augmentation, both the radical and all the variable syllables that follow it must be enunciated with a clearness that requires a certain effort. Other things being equal then, that is, the proportion of vocal elements being similar, and these of such character as to admit of equal facility of utterance, the language with strong inflections will be most easily pronounced by the speaker and at the same time most readily understood by the hearer. It is, however, true, on the other hand, that by a natural adaptation or compensation, the vocal elements seldom or never *are* equally proportioned in inflected and uninflected languages, the clear vowel predominating in the former, and the obscure consonant in the latter, and, therefore, with a full and, musically speaking, *staccato* enunciation, such as is usually possessed by the natives of Southern Europe, the inflected language will be most intelligible to the listener. But the pronunciation of vowels requires a much greater expenditure of breath than that of consonants, and the moment the articulation becomes artificial, as in reading or speaking with an unnatural tone, the demands upon the respiration, and the necessity of distinctly pronouncing the unaccented terminal syllables, conspire to make it more fatiguing to the reader or speaker.* It is true Humboldt

* It is a fact readily admissible by all close observers on this subject, that some languages make a larger demand upon the organs of speech than do others. Many years since, I had occasion, in Greece, to compare two copies of a legal record in modern Greek, a young American, thoroughly conversant with the language, assisting me. The method we followed was this: one of us held the first copy, the other the second, and we read aloud alternately to each other. We found we could not read more than ten or fifteen minutes each, at a time, without a considerable pause for recovering breath. The modern Greek system of accentuation is very diverse from that of the Gothic or other European tongues, and this circumstance, combined with the necessity of pronouncing distinctly the final syllable of words, makes so large demands on the respiration as to render reading aloud in that language an exercise very fatiguing to the lungs. Homer's simile, comparing the smooth flow of old Nestor's words to the falling of flakes of winter snow, does not apply to the utterance of the modern Palikari.

Even Italian requires more breath than English, for, although Italians appear to speak their own language with great mechanical facility, yet the voice soon tires, and Parliamentary speakers are often obliged to ask leave to suspend their harangues for a few minutes for the sake of repose—a circumstance

remarks, that after having been long accustomed to use Spanish, he found the return to German fatiguing to the organs of speech. I think this, however, was from the necessity of employing in pronunciation muscles long disused, and that the sense of weariness was probably confined to those muscles. But let any one equally familiar with two foreign languages, one inflected and one invariable, or one with strong and one with weak inflections, try the experiment of reading aloud an hour in each, and he will find, as a general rule, that the more numerous the weak inflections, the more fatiguing the reading. German and Italian may serve to illustrate the difference, the latter exhausting the voice of the reader much the soonest. It is true that the comparison of these two languages is not in all respects a perfectly fair test of the soundness of the principles I have laid down. The German has terminal inflections to as great an extent as the Italian, but it must be remembered that, in conjunction with these, it very often employs the letter-change in the accented syllable, and this renders it unnecessary to bring the final vowel fully out. The plural of *die Hand* is *die Hände*, but the vowel-change in the radical syllable indicates the number with so much certainty, that the *e* final may be dropped or half-suppressed, without creating any ambiguity. In Italian, the inflected syllable or syllables always terminate the word, and themselves end with a vowel. In the singular number of the verbs, the person, and in nouns and adjectives, both number and gender are usually determined by the final vowel alone, so that in most cases the grammatical category of the word, and of course its relations to the period, depend upon a single vowel, which of course must be very clearly articulated. Again, the final vowel in German inflected words is very commonly the obscure *e*, while in Italian words it is the clear vowel *a*, or long *o* and *i*, the feminine *e* being of less frequent occurrence. All these Italian endings make larger demands on the organs of speech than the German terminations. Further, the constant use of the nominative personal pronoun in German

which proves that the fatigue I have spoken of does not arise merely from the call upon unused muscles, as might perhaps be the case in reading or declaiming in a foreign tongue, but from the language itself. An English barrister, Dr. Kenely for instance, will speak many hours, for days in succession, with scarcely any apparent pause.

allows a less emphatic utterance of the signs of person in the verb; its frequent omission in Italian requires the signs to be made more conspicuous. The general result of all these circumstances is that in German, in most cases, the only syllable which requires a very distinct pronunciation is the radical; in Italian, there is another syllable, and that a final vowel, which demands an equally full and precise delivery. Of course, in Italian, both causes of exhaustion, the predominance of open vowels, and the necessity of accentuating and distinctly articulating a greater number of syllables, co-exist, and allowance must be made accordingly in treating the German as a representative of uninflected, the Italian of inflected languages, with reference to facility of utterance. At the same time, I think similar general conclusions will be arrived at by comparing any two speeches, the one inflected, the other uninflected, or the one marked by weak, the other by strong inflections.

LECTURE XVIII.

GRAMMATICAL INFLECTIONS.

IV.

IN order to comprehend and appreciate the nature and extent of the change which English has undergone in the transformation from an inflected to a comparatively uninflected structure, we must cast a glance at the grammatical system of the Anglo-Saxon, from which modern English is chiefly derived. The border-land of the Scandinavian and Teutonic races, whence the Anglo-Saxon invaders of England appear to have emigrated, has always been remarkable for the number of its local dialects, and it is very doubtful whether there is anywhere to be found a district of so narrow extent with so great a multitude of tongues, or rather jargons. The Frisic, which may be said as a whole to bear a closer resemblance to English than does any other linguistic group, differs so much in different localities, that the dialects of Frisian parishes, separated only by a narrow arm of the sea, are often quite unintelligible to the inhabitants of each other.* The gen-

* It is not always safe to rely on the vocabularies of philologists who collect words to sustain theories, and therefore we may doubt the accuracy of the generalizations of most inquirers into the Frisic patois. If we can depend on the testimony of unprejudiced observers, or of the people themselves, there is no such unity of speech among those who employ what, for want of a better term, or to support particular ethnological views, are collectively called the Frisian dialects, as to entitle them to a unity of designation. According to Kohl, one of the most acute and observant of travellers, and who has been happily characterized as the *Herodotus of modern Europe*, "The commonest things, which are named almost alike all over Europe, receive quite different names in the different Frisic islands. Thus, in Amrum, *father* is called A a t j; on the Halligs, B a b a or B a b e; in Sylt, F o d e r or V a a r; in many districts on the main land, T ä t e; in the eastern part of Föhr, O t i or A h i t j. Although these people live within a couple of [German] miles from each other, these words differ more than p è r e, p a t e r, p a d r e, V a t e r, and f a t h e r

eral ultimate tendency of this confusion of tongues is undoubtedly towards uniformity, but uniformity must be attained by mutual concessions. Each dialect must sacrifice most of its individual peculiarities before a common speech can be framed out of the whole of them. These peculiarities lie much in inflection. The dialects, it may be predicted, will be harmonized by dropping discordant endings; and if the Frisic shall survive long enough to acquire a character of unity, it will be very nearly what the English would have been without the introduction of so many words of Romance origin.

Such a process as this the Anglo-Saxon actually underwent in England, and accordingly its flecational system, in the earliest examples which have come down to us, is less complete than in either of the Gothic tongues that contributed to its formation. In fact, the different Angle and Saxon dialects employed in England never thoroughly amalgamated, and there was always much irregularity and confusion in orthography and the use of inflections, so that the accident of the language, in no stage of it, exhibits the precision and uniformity of that of the Icelandic or the *Moeso-Gothic*.

used for the same purpose by the French, Latins, Italians, Germans, and English, who are separated by hundreds of leagues. We find among the Frisians not only primitive Germanic words, but what may be called common European radicals, which different localities seem to have distributed among them."

"Even the names of their districts and islands are totally different in different dialects. For instance, the island called by the Frisians who speak High-German, *Sylt*, is called by the inhabitants *Söl*, in *Föhr Sol*, and in *Amrum Sal*."

"The people of *Amrum* call the Frisians *Frisk*, with the vowel short; in the southern districts, the word is *Freeske*, with a long vowel; elsewhere it is pronounced *Fraasche*." *Kohl*, II., Chap. XX.

It appears further, from the same writer, that these numerous dialects are intelligible only to the inhabitants of the narrow localities where they are indigenous, and that their variations are too great to permit the grammars and glossaries which have yet appeared to be regarded as anything more than expositions of the peculiarities of individual patois, and by no means as authorities for the existence of any such general speech as the imaginary *Frisic* of linguistic theories. The argument for the oneness of these dialects rests chiefly on negatives. It may be said of each of them: it is not Danish nor Dutch, nor Low-German nor High-German, but, at the same time, they all resemble any one of these languages very nearly as much as they do each other. See *Lecture ii*.

In giving a general sketch of the grammar of our ancient Anglian speech, I shall not notice local or archaic peculiarities of form, and the statements I make may be considered as applicable to the Anglo-Saxon in the best period of its literature, and, with unimportant exceptions, true of all its distinguishable dialects.

In general, then, we may say that the article, noun, adjective, and pronoun were declinable, having different forms for the three genders, for four cases, and for the singular and plural numbers; besides which, the personal pronoun of the first and second persons had a dual, or form exclusively appropriated to the number two. This, in the first person, was *wit*, *we two*; in the second, *git*, *you two*. The possessive had also a dual. The adjective, as in the other Gothic languages, had two forms of inflection, the one employed when the adjective was used without a determinative, the other when it was preceded by an article or a pronoun agreeing also with the noun. These forms are called, respectively, the indefinite and the definite. Thus, the adjective corresponding to *good*, used in the definite form singular, or with a determinative, makes the nominative masculine *g ó d a*, feminine, *g ó d e*, neuter, *g ó d e*; the genitive or possessive, *g ó d a n*, for all the genders. When used without a determinative, the nominative is *g ó d*, for the three genders; the genitive or possessive, *g ó d e s*, for the masculine and neuter, and *g ó d r e* for the feminine. The adjective was also regularly compared much as in the modern English augmentative form, but not by *more* and *most*.

The verbs had four moods: the indicative, subjunctive, imperative, and infinitive, and but two tenses, the present or indefinite, used also as a future, and the past. There were, however, compound tenses in the active voice, and a passive voice formed as in modern English by the aid of other verbs. In English the auxiliaries are generally used simply as indications of time, as, *he will sing*, which is merely a future of the verb to sing, like the Latin *cantabit*; *he had sung*, the Latin *cantaverat*. In Saxon, on the other hand, the auxiliary usually retained its independent meaning, and was more rarely employed as a mere determinative. Thus *willan*, corresponding to our *will*, when used with an infinitive, did not form a future, but always expressed a purpose, as indeed it still often does, and with the remarkable exception of

the verb *be on*, *to be*, which is generally future, the Saxon had absolutely no method of expressing the future by any form or combination of verbs, so that the context alone determines the time.

While, then, the English article has but one form for all cases, genders, and numbers, the Saxon had ten. Our noun has two forms, one for the nominative and objective, one for the possessive and plural; or, in the few nouns with the strong plural inflection, four, as *man*, *man's*, *men*, *men's*; generally the Saxon had five or six. The modern adjective has one termination in the positive degree, the Saxon ten. The English regular or weak verb, as *to love*, seven endings; the corresponding Saxon, thirteen, even without counting the inflected cases of the participles. From all this, it will be obvious that the Anglo-Saxon could indicate by inflections many relations and conditions of words which we can express only by particles; and that consequently it was more independent of fixed laws of position, and less encumbered by determinatives, than modern English. By way of illustration of the force and beauty which the Anglo-Saxon element confers upon English, I compared the conclusion of the parable of the men who built their houses respectively upon sand and upon rock, in the versions of St. Matthew and St. Luke, as rendered by the authorized English translation. It will be interesting to analyze St. Matthew's account of the same catastrophe in the Anglo-Saxon, in Wycliffe's translation of about 1380, in Tyndale's, of 1526, and King James's, of 1611.* The Anglo-Saxon, translated word for word into our present English, would read thus: then rained it, and there came flood, and blew winds, and rushed on that house, and the [or that] house fell, and its fall was great.

Here it will be observed that the verbs *rained*, *came*, and *blew* all precede their nominatives, and it may be added that *blew* and *rushed* both have a distinct plural form, *bleow on* and *ahruron*.

In Wycliffe's time, although the plural form of the verb was still retained, yet the general loss of the inflections of the noun had compelled the introduction of a positional syntax, and he

* The texts of the Greek, Mæso-Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, and modern English versions of the passage under consideration, will be found in a note to Lecture vii., pages 142, 143.

writes, in the modern order of arrangement: "and rayn came doun, and floodis camen, and wyndis blewēn, and thei hurliden in to that house; and it felle doun, and the fallyng doun therof was grete."

Before Tyndale, 1526, the plural form of the verb in *n*, had become obsolete. We read, accordingly, in his version: "And abundaunce of rayne descended, and the fluddes came, and the wyndes blewe, and beet upon that housse, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

Between the Anglo-Saxon and the English of Wycliffe, the most important structural, or rather rhetorical, difference is the greater freedom of arrangement in the Anglo-Saxon verbs, which in this passage, in three instances, precede the nominative; whereas in Wycliffe the verb uniformly follows its subject, as in the modern dialect. In the century and a half which intervened between Wycliffe and Tyndale, not only had the verbs dropped the plural ending, but the definite article had become common. In Saxon, we cannot deny that the definite article existed, but it always partook very strongly of its original character of a demonstrative pronoun, and perhaps it should be rather regarded as such in the one instance where I have represented it by *the*, "and *the* house fell." In Wycliffe, *rayn*, *floodis*, and *wyndis* are all without the article, "rayn came doun, and fluddes camen, and wyndis blewēn," and it is employed only before *fallyng*, "and *the fallyng* doun therof"; but in Tyndale's time the noun had ceased to be used thus indefinitely, and *fluddes*, *wyndes*, and *fall* are all preceded by the article *the*. The translators of 1611, with excellent judgment, adopted Tyndale's version word for word with no change except to say simply "the raine," for "abundaunce of rayne," which Tyndale had used. And here I cannot but pause to notice a remarkable felicity of expression in this translation, in the employment of an inversion of the regular order of words in the last clause of the verse. The fact of the *fall* of the house had been already announced, and made additionally striking by an enumeration of the circumstances which had preceded and caused it—the pouring of the rain, the rushing of the flood, the blast of the tempest. The immediate introduction of the noun *fall* would have added nothing to the effect of what had gone before. To heighten and intensify the impression, therefore, the translator

skillfully inverts the phrase, begins the concluding clause with the adjective—"and it fell, and *great* was the fall of it,"—and thus produces a climax superior in force even to the original Greek text.

When, as a natural result of Latin and Norman influence, the operation of such causes as I described in the last lecture had stripped the Anglo-Saxon of most of its inflections, and introduced a large number of Romance words and grammatical forms, the first effort of the newly-framed speech was to develop a new set of inflections, and if English had existed as an unwritten tongue for a sufficient time after the coalescence of the two elements into one language, it is probable that it would have acquired as complete a system of declension and conjugation, and consequently a syntax as free from restraints of position as either of its constituent tongues. The Saxon nouns had several modes of forming the plural, according to gender and declension. One of these declensions only made the nominative plural in *s*. This agreed with the Norman grammar, which, like the modern French, used *s* or *z*, (and in a few cases *x*.) as the sign of the plural, and it was natural that this coincidence should have been seized upon and adopted as a general rule for the construction of all plurals.* True, some plurals formed by letter-change or in *n* remained, but most Saxon nouns dropped the regular inflection, and from the very commencement of the English language took a plural in *s*. This is abundantly shown by Layamon and the Ormulum, the former using this plural (especially in the later text) very frequently, the latter employing it almost exclusively.

The Saxon nouns had three genders, and the masculine and feminine were very often applied to objects incapable of sex. The Norman had but two genders, the neuter not being recognized in its grammar. When the two languages coalesced, a com-

* This statement is too loose. Norman *masculine* nouns regularly made the nominative *singular*, the accusative and the vocative *plural*, in *s*, but the *nominative plural* was without that termination. But there were many exceptions, and in these instances the *nominative plural* was also in *s*, as were also the plural of *all feminines* derived from Latin nouns of the first declension, and many derived from other declensions. The consequence was that the plurals in *s* were very much more numerous than those without it, and a foreigner would naturally have taken *s* as the general plural sign.

promise was effected by employing the masculine and feminine as indications, not of grammatical gender, or termination, but of sex, and confining the neuter to objects without sex.* This, of course, led to the rejection of those Anglo-Saxon endings of the article, the noun, and the adjective, which had indicated grammatical gender; and as the Saxon inflections for case depended more or less upon the gender, they naturally were dropped also when grammatical gender was discarded. Nothing then was left for distinction but the numbers, singular and plural. Although one declension of the Saxon nouns made the plural in *s*, and thereby the general adoption of *s* as a sign for the plural of nouns was facilitated, yet no plural form of the Saxon adjective employed that sign. The termination in *e* was the general nominative plural ending of all adjectives in the indefinite form, and this continued to be used in English to designate that number for some centuries, though not with strict uniformity. Indeed, when the adjective was employed as a noun, it sometimes made the plural in *s*, even down to the end of the sixteenth century.† The *e*, as a sign of number, was finally dropped soon after that period, and adjectives have since been indeclinable, to the great advantage of our grammar.

The verb, which, to the distinctions of number and person, in most languages adds those of time and other conditions, is always subject to a greater number of inflectional changes than any other part of speech. The conjugations of the Saxon and the Norman verb had scarcely any point of resemblance except the employment of compound tenses, and the consequence naturally was, that the characteristic endings of both were principally rejected, and the radical of the verb left almost uninflected, and dependent on auxiliaries for the expression of the various modifications of its radical meaning. In its selection of auxiliaries, it conformed partly to Romance, partly to Gothic models; and it must be admitted that with respect to the future tense, the English syntax is an improvement upon the Saxon. *Shall* and *will*, it is true,

* The lack of grammatical gender in English may perhaps be regarded as its most marked characteristic. See Bleek, *Comparative Grammar of the S. African Languages, Ursprung der Sprache*, etc.

† See Lecture xiv.

existed in that language, but not as true auxiliaries, and the use of them as signs of the future, if not directly borrowed from the Old-Northern, at least belongs to the Scandinavian, not the Teutonic side of Anglo-Saxon.

One of the most curious facts in the history of the English verb is the tendency which existed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries to the formation of new regular inflections, by the coalescence or agglutination of verbs and pronouns. This was indeed, perhaps, in some sort, a dialectic peculiarity, but cases occur in too wide a range of writers to allow us to consider it as by any means altogether local in its character. It seems to have begun with the interrogative, where the pronoun, following the verb, would most easily unite with it; but the agglutinate form is often used in affirmative periods. The coalescence of the pronoun of the second person and the verb is most frequent, but examples of a like process in the other persons are not wanting. Thus in the fable of Dame Siriz in Wright's *Analecta Literaria*, there are several instances of the use of *willi* and *woldi*, for *I will* and *I would*; in the ancient Interlocutory Poem in the first volume of the *Reliquiæ Antiquæ*, we find *kepi*, *hawry*, *cani*, for *I keep*, *I have*, *I can*; in the Thrush and the Nightingale, in the same volume, *ne rechi*, for *I do not reck*, or *care*; *forbeddi*, for *I forbid*. The coalescence of the second person with the verb is extremely common, and there are few English writers of the fourteenth century who do not furnish exemplifications of it. Robert of Gloucester has *penkestow*, *misdestow*, for *thinkest thou*, *misdoest thou*; Dame Siriz, *troustu*, for *trouest thou*; the Seven Sages, *woltu*, for *thou wilt*; the ancient Interlocutory Poem above referred to has a like form, with the pronoun, *thu canstu*; and Piers Ploughman, among numerous other cases, the negative inflection, *why nadistow*, *why hadst-thou-not*.*

* Similar combinations are found in German, even as late as the time of Luther. Thus, in Warnunge D. M. Luther an seine lieben Deutschen, Wittenberg, 1531, *wiltu* occurs at F. III., and *mustu* at F. b. In the much older Orendel und Bride, Zurich, 1858, we find instances of the coalescence of all the three persons with the verb: *woldich*, p. 17; *mahtu*, 6; *vasthi*, *woldhi*, 1; *kondhi*, 9.

In the famous *abrenuntio Diaboli*, of the eighth century, Wright (*Biog. Britan. Lit. I.*, 810,) prints *forsachistu*, *gelobistu*, but other critics separate the pronoun from the verb. There are many instances of like

In the carelessness of pronunciation, which usually marks hasty and familiar speaking, the auxiliary *have* is indistinctly articulated. "I should have gone," is pronounced almost, "I should a gone," and by persons ignorant of reading and writing, altogether so. In old English books, many instances occur where the compound tense is thus printed, as, for example, in Lord Berners' Froissart, vol. I., chap. 225, "a man coude not cast an appell among the, but it shuld *a fallen* on a bassenet or a helme"; in Wycliffe's Apology for the Lollards, page 1, "I knowlech to *a felid* and seid þus." In the Paston Letters, I. 22, "brybe's that wold *a robbed* a ship"; Paston Letters, I. 6, "a gret nowmbre come to Arfleet for to *arescuyd* it," in which last example the coalescence is complete.*

A like tendency is discoverable in other classes of words, such as the formation of an objective of the definite article *the* by a coalescence with the prepositions *in*, *on*, and *at*; *ythe*, *ith* being often written for *in the*, *oth* for *on the*, *atte* for *at the*. There are also traces of a new form in the nouns. In Icelandic, Swedish, and Danish, the nouns have a definite declension formed by affixing the termination of the definite article according to case and gender. Thus, in Swedish, *konung* means king, *konungen*, *the king*, *konungens*, *the king's*; *hus* means house, *huset*, *the house*.† A somewhat similar contraction existed in early Eng-

combinations in old Icelandic, and among others may be mentioned the construction of a negative form of the verb by affixing the particle, *a*, *at*, *a þ*, or *a ð*; also of negative forms of the noun, adjective, pronoun, and adverb, by affixing the syllables *gi* or *ki*.

In Italian these combinations also occur. Ariosto has *mogliema*, for *mia moglie*; *moglierema* is also used for the same; *paterno*, for *mio padre*; *mammata* for *tua mamma*.

* In the Chronicle of Capgrave, p. 278, we meet *ha lived*, or *a lived*; and these forms occur even in the Life of Richard III., ascribed to More, as printed in Hardyng, p. 547, reprint of 1812. "Richard might (as the fame went) *asaue*d hymself if he would *afled* awaie." But this passage is not in Rastell's edition of 1557, and More could hardly have adopted this colloquialism.

† The Swedish definite article is *den* for the masculine and feminine, *det* for the neuter. When post-positive in the process of coalescence the initial consonant *d* is dropped, and *konung den* becomes *konungen*, *hus det*, *huset*. This, at least, is the present grammatical resolution of the compound. Historically, however, *konungen* is the Icelandic *konúngrinn*, a definite formed by the coalescence of the noun *konúgr*, and

lish, in the case of nouns beginning with a vowel. *The empress* was written and spoken as one word, *thempress*; *the cvangel* or *gospel thevangel*; *the apostle, thapostle*; *the ancre* (anchor) *thancre*. There are even faint and doubtful indications of a like inclination with regard to the article *an*, and the creation of an indefinite form of the noun by employing this article as a prefix; thus we find *anedgetoole* for *an edge tool*, *a nounpire** for *an umpire*, *a naugre* for *an auger*, *a napron* for *an apron*, but these seem to be rather cases of orthographical confusion than really new combinations.

The effect of reducing a language to writing is to put a stop to the formation of inflections. Inflections doubtless often grow out of a hurried and indistinct pronunciation of familiar and frequently recurring combinations; but, when the words are written, the mind is constantly brought back to the radical forms, and the tendency to coalescence thus arrested; and indeed the effect of writing does not stop here, but it leads to the resolution of compounds not much altered in form, into their primitive elements.

In listening to the conversation of uneducated persons, and even to the familiar colloquial speech of the better instructed, we observe a strong inclination to the coalescence of words. Let a foreigner, who should be wholly ignorant of the grammatical structure of the European languages, but able to write down articulations, record the words of our ordinary conversation as he would hear them spoken. The result would be an approximation to an inflected language. He would agglutinate in writing the words which we agglutinate in speaking, and thus, in many cases, form

the definite pronominal article *hin n*, (for which latter word the modern Swedish substitutes *d e n*,) and so of other nouns which have been traditionally handed down from the Old-Northern period. In the definite form of new words, the analogy of the primitive language has been followed and the article retains the *d* only when it stands alone.

It is an interesting linguistic fact that in the Roumanian, though a speech of Latin origin, the definite article is post-positive.

* The *n* in *nounpire* may be radical, for it has been ingeniously suggested that this obscure word is perhaps *n o n p a i r*, *odd one*, a third person called in to turn the scale between two disagreeing arbitrators. Also the Anglo-Saxon form of *auger* is *navegar*, which would seem to show that the *n* here is likewise radical. See Wedgewood, under *apron*. For many similar cases, see Wright's *Volumes of Vocabularies*, p. 206 *et seq.*

a regular conjugation. Take for example the interrogative use of the verb *to have*; have I? have you? has he? The stranger would not suspect that each of these phrases was composed of two words, but would treat them as the first, second, and third persons of an interrogative form of the verb *to have*. His spelling would conform to the pronunciation, and he would write *havvi*, *havve*, *hazzy*. Now those who first reduce a language to writing are much in the condition I have just supposed. They record what they hear, and had English long remained unwritten, the coalescences would have become established, and conjugations and declensions formed accordingly. The interrogative would have had its regular verbal inflection, and a past infinitive, *agone*, *afallen*, would have grown out of the combination of the participle with the auxiliary, the latter becoming a syllabic augment.*

This is precisely analogous to what actually did take place in most of the Romance dialects, because they were used colloquially for centuries before they were written, Latin being the language of the government, of law, of literature, and of religion.

The two great elements of which English is composed had each its written dialect, and it would therefore have been quite natural that the new language should very early have become a written speech, if there had been an actual historical hiatus between Anglo-Saxon and Norman-English. But the change from the one to the other was so gradual, that the spoken dialect always existed in a written form, orthographical mutations following closely upon orthoepical revolutions. Between Latin and the modern Romance tongues, on the other hand, there was an interval, and consequently these latter, as literary dialects, had a definite commencement, while English had none. Hence, English made little progress in new grammatical formations, and the predominance of Norman influence led to the rejection not only of Saxon endings, but of many other facilities of expression, the loss of which is a very serious evil to the English tongue. For instance, the Saxon had a negative form for all verbs beginning

* In French, it was only the early reduction of the spoken tongue to writing, which prevented the development of a regular negative verb and definite noun. *N'avoir* would have become permanently *navoir*, *l'homme*, *lomme*, and *un homme*, *nomme*, in writing as in speech, had French remained merely an oral dialect a few centuries longer.

with a vowel, the aspirate *h*, or the semi-vowel *w*. This consisted in using the consonant *n*, the initial of the Saxon negative particle *ne*, as a prefix. The convenience of this form was strongly felt, and it was not abandoned in poetry for some centuries after the English became a distinct language. Chaucer constantly says *I nam*, for *I am not*, *I nas*, for *I was not*, he *nould*, for he *would not*, he *nad*, for he *had not*, *I nill*, for *I will not*. The Wycliffite versions often use the negative verb in the imperative, as in Judges xviii. 9: "*Nyle ye be negligent, nil ye ceese.*" Sylvester, at the end of the sixteenth century, occasionally employs this form, as, for example, in this verse of his twenty-sixth sonnet:

Who *nill* be subjects, shall be slaves, in fine.

We still retain the negative *nill* in the phrase, *will he, nill he, whether he will or not*, where *will* and *nill* are not auxiliaries, but independent verbs. Wesley attempted to revive *nill*, and wrote: "Man *wills* something, because it is pleasing to nature, and he *nills* something, because it is painful to nature."* The linguistic sense of the English people was at a low ebb in Wesley's time, and his use of *nill* found few if any imitators, but the fact that we still employ similar compounds in *none, neither, never*, which are simply *one, either, ever*, with the negative prefix *n*, shows that this form is not radically repugnant to the present genius of the language, and I see nothing very improbable in the recovery of the negative verb.

The Norman, though it had its coalescences, like the other Romance dialects, as for instance in the case of the future, was nevertheless averse to compounds; and as it became more and more an influential element in the organization of English, it not only checked further coalescence, but led to the resolution of some compounds which had become established, and hence the new inflections were soon abandoned.†

* *Nolo, nill*, becomes more strongly negative by assuming a positive form. *Non volo* is a negation of will, *nolo* is a volition. Why has not the French *volonté* and *volution*, as well as *volonté* and *volition*?

† Our English verb *hunt* appears to be allied to a Mæso-Gothic word of nearly similar form, which has been conjectured to be cognate with *hand*, so that the primary signification of *hunt* would be, to take with the hand, or catch. Some etymologists derive *hound* from *hunt*, but it is quite as probable

The only deliberate, organized experiment for the restoration of an obsolete English form, is that of the Society of Friends, who have long striven to reintroduce what they call the plain language, or the employment of the singular *thou*, and the corresponding verbal inflection, in place of the plural *you*, in addressing a single person. It is not strange that a phraseology, which was adopted as the badge of a sect, should have failed to secure general acceptance, but the entire want of success in the attempt to establish it even among the Friends themselves, is a strong evidence of the rooted aversion of the Anglican people and speech to much variety of inflection. In the first fervor of religious party zeal, doubtless, educated Friends spoke more grammatically, but the second person of the verb does not appear ever to have been generally employed by their followers; and even the nominative of the pronoun of the second person was soon discarded, so that *will thee, has thee, does thee*, were substituted for *wilt thou, hast thou, dost thou*.

That we shall recover many lost Saxon words there can be no doubt, and poetry will yet reanimate obsolete forms specially adapted to metrical convenience. New regular inflections,* however, are not to be expected, perhaps not even desired; and some grammarians even consider it probable that formal distinctions of case, number, and person will be rejected altogether, and all grammatical relations determined by auxiliaries, prepositions, or other particles. That such has been the general tendency of English since the birth of its literature is quite certain, and the

that *hunt* is derived from *hound*, which in Saxon was spelt not with *ou*, but simply *u*. In that case, to *hunt* would be to *chase with hounds*, or dogs, or, as we sometimes now say, to *hound* or to *dog*. At the period when there was a tendency to resolve compounds, this very obvious, and, as I much incline to believe, true etymology, struck the rude philologists of the time, and, accordingly, we find *hunter* written in early English *houndsman*, sometimes as one word, but not unfrequently as two, *hounds man*. See the History of Helyas, Thom's Early Prose Romances, III., 55, 65.

* Among the possible improvements in language, we may suggest the desirableness of a form of comparison of diminution in degree. In the case of adjectives of really absolute character (as far as there are any such) there often exists an *opposite* or *negative* which answers the purpose of a special inflection. Thus to *long*, *longer*, *longest*, correspond *short*, *shorter*, *shortest*; but why should not this relation be expressed by inflections from the same root, signifying *not long*, *less long*, *least long*?

fact is too familiar to need to be established by proof, but one or two examples may be worth citing. The use of the possessive pronouns, and of the inflected possessive case of nouns and pronouns, was, until a comparatively recent period, very much more extensive than at present, and they were employed in many cases where the preposition with the objective now takes their place. In modern English, the inflected possessive of nouns expresses almost exclusively the notion of property or appurtenance. Hence, we say a *man's hat*, or a *man's hand*, but the *description of a man*, not a *man's description*. And, of course, we generally limit the application of this form to words which indicate objects capable of possessing or enjoying the right of property; in a word, to persons, or at least animated and conscious creatures, and we accordingly speak of a *woman's bonnet*, but not of a *house's roof*. In short, we now distinguish between the possessive and the genitive. This we must allow is a well-founded distinction, but it is of recent introduction; and indeed some modern writers are inclined to discard it, but thus far with few imitators. Clifford, who had been a follower of Wycliffe, and recanted, expresses his repentance in his will before referred to, by styling himself "unworthie and *Goddis traytor*." So in the Paston Letters, written in the fifteenth century, we find "the *King's rebels*, the *King's traitors*," for rebels *against* the king, traitors *to* the king, and in Froissart, "*his rebels*." These expressions strike us oddly, but in reality they are not a whit more incongruous than the phrases, *the king's enemies*, *our enemies*, which have, singularly enough, remained current in English, and indeed in most European languages, but which will perhaps become as obsolete as the *king's traitors*. We may consistently say the *king's friends*, because we feel that men have certain rights, or at least interests, in their friends and in the sentiments which constitute friendship, but the *king's enemies* is no way grammatically distinguishable from the *king's rebels*. Few instances now remain of this repugnant use of the possessive, but its limitation to *persons* did not originate till long after the date of the authorities I have cited. Lodge, who translated the works of L. Annæus Seneca, near the beginning of the seventeenth century, says, in the preface to the second edition of that work: "Reader, I here once more present thee Senecaes translation." In this

case Seneca is to be considered the name, not of a person, but of his works collectively. This construction is frequent in Shakespeare, and Fuller in the *Infant's Advocate* printed in 1653, has this passage: "If we cannot perceive the manner of *sins poison*, no wonder if we cannot conceive the method of *graces antidote*, in Infants souls." Similar examples might be multiplied *ad infinitum*.*

In like manner, what is now a possessive pronoun was anciently but improperly used also as a genitive of the personal pronoun. In the Wycliffite version of Genesis ix. 2, we read: "And *youre* feer and *youre* trembling be upon alle the beestis of erthe," where the modern version rightly has, "and the fear of *you* and the dread of *you*." The possessives of the third person *his* and *their* were employed in this way much later than those of the first and second person, and even in recent times many instances can be found where these pronouns take a relative after them, as "*their* life who violate the principles of morality," for "the life of *those* who."†

* Notwithstanding this free use of the inflected possessive by old writers, we sometimes meet in them a long succession of the prepositional construction, as in this passage from the life of Beza in Abel Redivivus, p. 471: "for he not onely entred into a consideration of the truth of the doctrines of the Church of Rome," &c.

† In Anglo-Saxon, the *possessive pronoun* singular of the *first* person was *min*, of the *second* *þin*. The genitive plural of the *personal pronoun* was *ûre* in the *first* person, *eower* in the *second*, *hira*, *hiora*, or *heora*, in the *third*. The *possessive pronouns* plural of the *first* and *second* persons were formed by treating the genitive plural of the *personal pronouns* as a nominative, and declining it like an adjective pronoun. For the *third* person, there was no possessive pronoun in either the singular or plural, but the *genitives*, *his* in the masculine and neuter singular, *hire* in the feminine singular, and *hira*, *hiora* or *heora* for all genders in the plural, were used instead of possessive pronouns. The similarity of form between the genitive plural of the first and second persons and the plural possessive pronoun for those persons, naturally led to grammatical and logical confusion in the use of both, and the expressions I have quoted from the Wycliffite versions, "*your fear*," &c., were as improper at that time, as they would be now, for the logical distinction between the two pronominal forms was at no period of the language quite lost sight of, though it was not always strictly observed.

In the transition from Anglo-Saxon to English, the genitive plural of the personal pronoun was dropped, and the objective, with a preposition, substituted for it. This change was made before the time of Wycliffe, and the use of the possessive pronoun, instead of the genitive of the personal pronoun,

At present, the use of *whose*, the possessive of *who*, is pretty generally confined to persons, or things personified, and we should scruple to say, "I passed a house whose windows were open." This is a modern, and indeed by no means yet fully established, distinction. In Anglo-Saxon, the form *hwæs*, whence our

was a violation of the idiom of the language. This is shown abundantly by the authority of the Wycliffite translators themselves, for they very generally make the distinction, as, for example, in Joshua vii. 13, where we read, "cursyng is in the midel of *thee*," in the older text, and "in the myddis of *thee*," in the later, and in Ezekiel xxxvi. 23, where one text has "in the myddil of *them*," the other "in the myddis of *them*"; and so in many other passages, where these old translations agree with the authorized version. The vulgarism "in our midst," "in your midst," "in their midst," now unhappily very common, grows out of this confusion. The possessive pronoun cannot be properly applied, except as indicative of possession or appurtenance. The "midst" of a company or community of persons is not a thing belonging or appurtenant to the company, or to the individuals composing it. It is a mere term of *relation*, of an adverbial, not a substantive, character, and is an intensified form of expression for *among*. The phrase in question, therefore, is a gross solecism, and unsupported by the authority of pure idiomatic English writers. Shakespeare, 2 Pt. Henry VI. iv. 8, has "through the very midst of you"; and this is the constant form in the authorized translation of the Bible. In Leviticus xxvi. 11, the Anglo-Saxon is *to middes eowre* (*eower*), *to middes* being a preposition governing the personal pronoun *eowre*. The English translations all give "among you." In John i. 28, where the Greek text is *μέσος δὲ ὑμῶν*, the Anglo-Saxon is *to middes eow*; the later Wycliffite version, "in the myddil of *you*"; the older, "the myddil man of *you*."

In the passages where the later translations use *among* us, you, them, whom, the Wycliffite versions almost uniformly employ, "in the *myddil* or *myddis*"; and, of course, the exemplifications of this form are extremely numerous in those versions. In nine cases out of ten, certainly, the construction is, "in the *myddil* of us, you, them, or whom"; but there are a few instances, as, for example, in Exodus xxxiv. 10, Numbers xiv. 13, where "from or in *whoe myddil* or *myddis*," is used in both texts; and in the older translation of Jerome's Prologue to Romans, we find, "for myche merciful is God, the whiche wolde bringe you to *ours* followinge." *Our* is sometimes used in the same way elsewhere in Old-English, as in 1 Cor. i. 8, Wyc. Vers., older text: "alle that inclepyn the name of oure Lord Jhesu Crist in ech place of hem and *oure*"; later text, "ech place of hem and of *oure*"; where, in the older text, *our* is a genitive plural. So in the much earlier Legend of St. Brandan, Perc. Soc., p. 5, *your* is made a genitive plural; "ac *your*e an schal atta ende," and one of *you* shall at the end, &c.

With respect to these last examples, as I remarked above, the employment of *our* and *your* in this construction was contrary to both principle and usage in the English of that period. The use of *whose*, or even of *their*, in such

whose, was the genitive of all the genders of the pronoun *hw a*, and *whose* was universally employed as a neuter by the best English writers until a recent period, as, in certain combinations, it still is by very good authorities. The origin of this distinction is to be found in a fact to which I have before alluded, namely, the change in the office of genders in grammar. In Anglo-Saxon, grammatical gender was independent of sex. So long as the masculine, feminine, and neuter were indiscriminately applied to objects incapable of the distinction of sex, there was no very strong sense of a want of one possessive form for masculine and feminine, or in other words, *personal* objects, and another for neuter, or inanimate, *impersonal* things; but as this distinction became better and better established, and *who* was appropriated to *persons, which to things*,* the use of one possessive form for both was more and more felt to be inconsistent, and the employment of the possessive of both nouns and pronouns was regulated accordingly.

The necessity of a double form for the more precise expression of ideas which have become distinct, has led to the development of one of the few new inflections which modern English has evolved. In Anglo-Saxon, the personal pronoun represented in English by *he, she, it*, made the genitive or possessive *his* for the

phrases, would not have been so objectionable, (though I have not found *their* so employed in Wycliffe,) because there was no possessive pronoun for the *relative*, as we have seen there was not for the personal of the *third* person in Anglo-Saxon. In that language, *hw æ s*, the genitive or possessive *case* of the relative, or rather, interrogative, *hw á*, *hw æ t*, was used instead of a possessive pronoun for *all* genders and numbers. Where, therefore, the Anglo-Saxon did not distinguish the possessive case and the possessive pronoun, it was not strange that early English should confound them. At present, however, the distinction is established, and it is a corruption of speech to disregard it.

Milton's "my midst of sorrow," *Samson Agonistes*, 1339, is a poetical transposition for 'the midst of my sorrow,' and has no bearing on the present question.

* The Anglo-Saxon relative and interrogative was *hw á*, masc. and fem., and *hw æ t*, neut. It is true, *hw á* was generally employed in reference to persons, but, at least in interrogations, *hw æ t* was very often used in the same way, as *Hw æ t is þes Mannes Sunu: Who is this Son of Man?*

Who, as a relative, is a new grammatical form, not taken from either Anglo-Saxon or French.

masculine and neuter gender, *her* (hire) for the feminine, and so long as grammatical gender had not an invariable relation to sex, the employment of a common form for the masculine and neuter excited no feeling of incongruity. The change in the grammatical significance of gender suggested the same embarrassment with relation to the universal application of *his* as of *whose*, and when this was brought into distinct consciousness, a remedy was provided. At first, *it* was used as a possessive, without inflection or a preposition, and several instances of this occur in Shakespeare, as also in Leviticus xxv. 5, of the Bible of 1611: "That which groweth of *it* own accord."* *Its*, although to be found in printed books of a somewhat earlier date, is not once used in that edition, *his* being, in all cases except the one just cited, employed instead. The precise date and occasion of the first introduction of *its* is not ascertained, but it could not have been far from the year 1600. In the Acts of the Apostles we still read in the standard editions of our own day: "The iron

* The use of an uninflected form as a possessive, without the preposition of, was by no means confined to the pronoun *it*. In Robert of Gloucester, 93, we have

Conan þe *quene* *cosyn*, he clepude out þo stille,
and again
þe ich be kyng of Breteyne, þat was þin *uncle lond*.

The first verse of Robert de Brunne's version of Langtoft runs thus :

In Saint *Bede* *bokes* writen er stories olde ;
and on page 18 :
In *Charlemagn courts*, sire of Saint Diny's.

In the older Wycliffite version of Genesis xxix. 10, we find: "Whom whanne Jacob hadde seen, and wiste hir his *unkil doughter*"; and xxx. 36: "and putte a space of thre dales weye bitwix hem and his *doughtir husboond*." These latter cases might, it is true, be considered compounds, like the Danish Farbror, Morbror, (Fader-Broder, Moder-Broder,) but this explanation will not apply to the earlier examples I have given, or to numerous instances of a later date. Thus in the Paston Letters, I. 6: "for his sou'eyn *lady sake*"; I. 118: "on Seint *Simon day* and Jude"; I. 122: "such as most have intrest in the Lord *Wyllughby Goodes*"; II. 298: "my brother *Roaf asent*."

In the Fardle of Facions, 1555, p. 321, reprint of 1812, we have: "a certaine sede which groweth there of *the owne accorde*"; and in Holland's Pliny, I. 24, "hauing fire of *the owne before*." These forms are by no means uncommon.

gate opened of *his* own accord." I believe the earliest instances of the use of the neuter possessive yet observed are in Shakespeare, and other dramatists of that age. Most English writers continued for some time longer to employ *his* indiscriminately with reference to *male* persons or creatures, and to inanimate impersonal things. For a considerable period about the beginning of the seventeenth century, there was evidently a sense of incongruity in the application of *his* to objects incapable of the distinction of sex, and at the same time a reluctance to sanction the introduction of the new form *its* as a substitute. Accordingly, for the first half of that century, many of the best writers reject them both, and I think English folios can be found, which do not contain a single example of either. *Of it, thereof*, and longer circumlocutions were preferred, or the very idea of the possessive relation was avoided altogether. Although Sir Thomas Browne, writing about 1660, sometimes has *its* five or six times on one page, yet few authors of an earlier date freely use this possessive, and I do not remember meeting it very frequently in any writer older than T. Heywood. Ben Jonson sometimes employs *its* in his works, but does not recognize it in his Grammar. It occurs rarely in Milton's prose, and not above three or four times in his poetry. Walton commonly employs *his* instead. Fuller has *its* in some of his works, in others he rejects it, and in the Pisgah Sight of Palestine, printed in 1650, both forms are sometimes applied to a neuter noun in the course of a single sentence.* Sir Thomas Browne, on the other hand, rarely, if ever, employs *his* as a neuter, and I think that after the Restoration in 1660, scarcely any instances occur of the use of the old possessive for the newly-formed inflection. It is somewhat singular that the neuter possessive did not appear till long after the grammatical change with respect to gender had taken place in literature, but the explanation is to be found partly in a repugnance to the introduction of new inflections, and partly in the fact that the old application of genders was kept up in the spoken language long

* "Many miles hence, this river solitarily runs on as sensible of *its* sad fate suddenly to fall into the Dead Sea, at Ashdoth-Pisgah, where all *his* comfort is to have the company of two other brooks." Book II., 58.

"Whether from the violence of the wind then blowing on *its* stream, and angring it beyond *his* banks." Book II., 59.

after it had become extinct in the written. Indeed, they are still applied to inanimate objects, in the same confused way, in some English provincial dialects; and, even apart from the poetical vocabulary, traces of the same practice exist among us to this day. The indiscriminate attribution of the three genders, as in Anglo-Saxon and German, or of the masculine and feminine, as in French and Italian, to inanimate objects, is philosophically a blemish, and practically a serious inconvenience, in those languages, and it is a great improvement in English that it has simplified its grammar, by rejecting so superfluous, unmeaning, and embarrassing a subtlety.

A singular obsolete corruption in the syntax of our mother-tongue was revived not far from the period of the introduction of *its*, and it has been usually ascribed to a passion for generalizing the laws of language before its facts were well ascertained. Two centuries since it was common to write *John his stick*, *Mary her book*, and the like. Ben Jonson says, that "nouns in *z*, *s*, *sh*, *g*, and *ch*, make, in the possessive singular, *is*, in the plural, *es*," "which distinction," continues he, "not observed, brought in the monstrous syntax of the pronoun *his* joining with a noun betokening a possessor, as the *prince his house*." * The practice appears to have been founded on the grammatical theory that *s*, as a sign of the possessive case, was a contraction of the possessive pronoun *his*. But it is argued that those who introduced the innovation did not remember that *s* was the sign of the possessive in feminine as well as in masculine nouns, and in the plural number of the strong inflection also, in neither of

* Harvey, in 1580, in his reply to Immerito (Spenser), speaking of English orthography says: "But see what absurdities thys yf fauoured Orthographye, or rather Pseudography, hath ingendered; and howe one errour still breedeth and begetteth an other. Have wee not Mooneth, for Moonthe: sithence, for since; whilest, for whilste; phantasie, for phansie; euen for evn; diuel, for diu; *God hys wrath*, for *Goddess wrath*; and a thousande of the same stampe, wherein the corrupte Orthography in the moste hath bene the sole, or principall cause of corrupte Prosodye in ouer many." Mulcaster, in 1582, remarks on this form: "Neither do I se anie cause wher to use *his*, saving after words which end in *s*, as '*Socrates his* councill was this, *Platoes* that, and *Aristotles* this.'"

Cæsar his occurs in the *Polychronicon*, p. 227. *God, Mary is Sonns*, in *Morte Arthur*, (*Furnival*), p. 157.

which cases could it have been originally a contraction of *his*. They should have further considered, it is added, that upon this theory, the *s* final of the possessive pronouns *hers* and *theirs* must in like manner have been derived from *his*, which is a manifest absurdity, and that the *s* in *his* itself, which is evidently an inflected form of the nominative masculine personal pronoun *he*, could not be thus explained. As I have just remarked, *his* is the Anglo-Saxon possessive form of the pronoun for both the masculine and neuter genders, the feminine having anciently had the form *hire*, nearly corresponding to the modern *her*. It should be added that the *s* final is the earliest known sign of the possessive or genitive case in most of the languages of the Indo-European stock, and it may fairly be insisted, that, for the present, this may be received as an ultimate grammatical fact, not at this time admitting of etymological explanation.*

There is a striking analogous fact in the modern history of the Gothic languages, which cannot be passed over. I refer to the nearly contemporaneous introduction of a precisely similar syntactical form in the Swedish, Danish, and German, all of which in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries very frequently employed the possessive pronoun, in the masculine and feminine genders, and both numbers, as the sign of the genitive case of the noun.† In these dialects, there is the same discrepancy between the primitive form and the modern substitute, and even a greater difficulty in supposing the usual genitive sign to be derived from the possessive pronoun. This use of the pronoun is generally if not always confined to proper names, whereas in English it was applied also to common nouns, and in the former case it seems to have originated in the difficulty of declining foreign names with the native inflection. A similar device was sometimes resorted to in the Latin of that day, in the syntax of

* See last Note at the end of this Lecture.

† In German we find the following forms: In dem Wolf seinem Leibe, Grimm, *Kinder und Haus Märchen*, ed. 1879, p. 112. Den Swinegel Sten Fru, the same, pp. 647-8.

I would also refer to the following singular construction in English, "*In men's and women's minds.*" Here the *s* cannot stand for *his*. For the Scandinavian dialects, see examples cited by Varning, *Det Jydake Folksprog*, Part I. ff 856, and same work, Part II. ff 69.

modern proper names, and I think it probable that the Gothic languages borrowed it from this corrupt Latin form, for there is little reason to suppose that they could all have taken it from the syntax of the one among them which first introduced it.

If, however, further investigation shall show that it spontaneously originated in any two or more of them, the fact becomes very important, and it would be fair* to regard it as an expression of the linguistic sense of the Gothic race entitled to no little weight as an evidence that, in spite of the difficulty of reconciling the forms, the real origin of the Gothic genitive or possessive inflection is to be found in a coalescence of the noun and the possessive pronoun.*

The rejection of inflections, and especially the want of a passive voice, have compelled the use of some very complex and awkward expressions. The phrases *I am told*, *he had been gone half an hour*, strike foreigners as particularly monstrous. Such combinations as "*he was given a commission in a new regiment*" are employed by some of the best writers of the present day, as well as by those of an earlier period.† I find, in a late discourse

* The grammar of the Mæso-Gothic presents a case of resemblance between the genitive of the personal pronouns, which serves as a possessive, and the genitive or possessive case of certain nouns and adjectives. The genitive singular of the personal pronoun is *masc. is, fem. izos, neut. is*. The genitive singular of a numerous class of masculine nouns ends in *is*; as *nom. wigs, gen. wigis*. The same case of many feminines ends in *jos* or *os*; as *nom. þiudangardi, gen. þiudangardjos*. Thus far, there is a certain likeness between the possessive of the pronoun and the possessive ending of the noun, but the coincidences are too few to authorize the supposition that the ending in question was formed by a coalescence of the noun and pronoun, for in most Mæso-Gothic nouns, the possessive form admits of no such explanation. Between the genitive of the adjective and the pronoun, the resemblance is much stronger. Take the indefinite form of the adjective *gods, good*.

	Masc.	Fem.	Neut.
Nom. gods,		goda,	god, godata.
Gen. godis,		godaizos,	godis.

So superlative *batists, best*.

Nom. batists,	batista,	batist.
Gen. batistis,	batistaizos,	batistis.

† Lord Berners, in his translation of Froissart, Vol. I., chap. 89, says: "*I was shewd the gleave.*" Gibbon, Vol. I., chap. VII., observes of Maximin, "*he had been denied admittance.*"

by an eminent divine, a recommendation to literary men to acquire some manual occupation "which may *be-fallen-back upon* in case of need"; and Coleridge speaks of an impediment to "*men's turning their minds inwards* upon themselves." "Such a thing has *been gone-through-with*," "it ought *to-be-taken-notice-of*," "it ought not *to-be-lost-sight-of*," are really compound, or rather agglutinate passives, and the number of such will probably rather increase than diminish.* They make the language not less intelligible, but less artistic; less poetical, but not less practical, and they are therefore fully in accordance with those undefined tendencies which constitute the present drift of the English language.

* Ruskin's boldness as a writer is by no means confined to the expression of critical opinion, and he does not hesitate to employ familiar combinations from which more timid authors might shrink. Thus, vol. I., third ed., p. 68: "Now the whole determination of this question *depends upon whether* the unusual fact be," &c. Ibid., p. 121, "but it *depends upon whether* the energy of the mind which receives the instruction be sufficient," &c. Ibid., 890, "a confusion which you might as well hope to draw sea-sand particle by particle, as to imitate leaf for leaf."

NOTE REFERRED TO ON P. 345.—Notwithstanding these arguments, some able philologists are of opinion that, however corresponding forms are to be explained elsewhere, *s* as the sign of the possessive in English nouns is derived from, and truly represents, the possessive pronoun *his*, and hence it is important to examine the history of the form in question, though this cannot be done satisfactorily without recurring to manuscript authorities inaccessible to the American scholar.

The *s* or '*s* cannot be proved to represent, or stand for *his*, unless it can be shown that *his* was employed as the sign of the possessive case in English *before* the use of the ending *s* or '*s*. How far back then can we trace the employment of *his* for that purpose?

It is stated by Latham that the expression "*for Jesus Christ his sake*," in the Liturgy of the English Church, is "the only foundation for the assertion" that the genitive characteristic *s* is a contraction of the possessive pronoun *his*. The meaning of the grammarian is not clear, but if he intends to say, as he seems to do, that this form of the possessive is not older than that liturgy, he is certainly in error, although indeed the revived use of it cannot be positively traced to a much earlier period.

There is, so far as I am aware, no evidence of the employment of the possessive pronoun as a possessive sign in any stage of classical Anglo-Saxon. A large proportion of the nouns in that language, composing the second and third declension of Rask, the first of Klipstein, made the genitive or possessive in *es*, or sometimes *as*, and even *ys*, and in the transition to English, *s* or '*s* became the general possessive form for nouns of all the declensions. In the old-

est manuscript of Layamon, the last important Anglo-Saxon, or rather Semi-Saxon work—a manuscript of the early part of the thirteenth century, and probably nearly of the author's time—there are two examples of the use of *his* as the sign of the possessive of proper names. In another text, written, as is supposed, fifty years later, *his* is generally substituted for the *es* of the older manuscript, and is used, in a few cases, even with common nouns; but it is remarkable, that in the two instances where the older text has *his*, (I. pp. 175, 279,) the corresponding passages in the later have the regular possessive in *es*.

In the *Ormulum*, which I think must be regarded as English rather than Semi-Saxon, and if so, then the earliest specimen of English, the possessive of nouns, as well as the plural number, is formed by the addition of *s*, (or rather, in accordance with the peculiar orthography of the author, of two *es*,) without the apostrophe, and the pronoun never supplies its place. In the proclamation of Henry III., (1258,) the possessive is made in *s* or *es*. In Robert of Gloucester, at least in Hearn's edition of 1724, the possessive is almost invariably formed by the addition of *'s* or *'s* to the radical, but there are a very few cases where *ys* is used as the possessive sign, and printed separately from the noun. Thus, at page 64 :

þe hauene þer he was y slawe, aftur *Haym ys* name y wys,
Hamptone was y clepud, as he yet y clepud ys.

The pronoun *his* is printed in this edition, indifferently, *his*, *hys*, and *ys*, and therefore in the example I have cited, *ys* may possibly be a pronoun, but the mere separation of this syllable from the root in the manuscript does not prove it to be so, for the participial and preterite augment *y*, as in *y slawe*, *y clepud* in the above couplet, the prefix *bi*, as in *bi het*, *bi loue*, *bi com*, *bi gan*, the prefix *a*, (Latin *ad*), as in *acent* for assent, and in a passage from a different manuscript, p. 611, the plural sign *is* in *a peny is*, are separated from the root.

Besides this example from Robert of Gloucester, I find in that writer two other instances of the separation of the syllable *ys* from the root in the possessive case :

The kyng tok *Brut ys* owne body, in ostage as it were,—p. 13.
And after *Brut ys* owne nome he clepede it Bretagne,—p. 22.

There are many similar cases in the *Continuation* of Robert of Gloucester printed in the appendix to Herne's edition, and written apparently about the middle of the fifteenth century. Thus : " Sir *John is* tyme," p. 589 ; " In the V. Kyng *Henry is* tyme," p. 593 ; " through *God is* grace," p. 595 ; and the use of the pronoun *his* as a possessive sign is frequent in Hardyng, who is supposed to have finished his chronicle about 1465, though he most usually employs the regular possessive in *s*. Thus, reprint of 1812, p. 156 : " In the year of *Christ his* incarnacion." P. 226 : " and putte hym whole in *God his* high mercye." And in the continuation of 1543, p. 436, " *Kyng Henry the VI. hys* wife."

In Gower, Conf. Am., Paull., iii. 856, is a passage where *his* may be a possessive sign :

To holde love *his* covaunt ;

but it is possible that *love* may here be used as a dative, to hold *to* love his covenant, his requirement or stipulation.

No example of this construction has been observed in Piers Ploughman, Chaucer, or the Wycliffite versions, but three apparent instances occur in Torrente of Portugal, at verses 880, 1884, and 1902; the *deuylle ys* hed, But it be for *Jhesu is sake*, and ffor *Jeshu is love*. These, however, are inconclusive, for the same reason as those cited from Robert of Gloucester. The ending in *ys* is often found about this period, in pronouns where it could not have been derived from *his* or *hys*, as in one of the Paston Letters, (Vol. I., 46,) written in 1470, in which *hers* is spelt *hyrrys*, and *ours*, *howrys*, and the plural of nouns very often takes this ending. The form "my Lord Bedford *ys* godes," in the Paston Letters, I. 122, "to my Maistr *ys* place," I. 198, are probably mere orthographical errors, as they are contrary to the almost uniform usage in that collection.

In the *Morte d'Arthur*, first printed in 1485, tenth book, chapter thirty-fifth, I find this passage: "Beware, Kynge Marke, and come not nyghe me, for wete thou wel that I saued *Alycander his lyf*," and there is a more equivocal instance in the seventh chapter of the fourth book: "This lord of this castel *his* name is Sir Damas." In general, the possessive is formed in this work as in modern times, but always without the apostrophe.

The earliest examples I have met with of the free and constant use of *his* as a possessive sign are in the continuation of Fabyan's Chronicle, commencing with the reign of Henry VIII. and printed in 1542, pp. 696, 699, 701, 702, and elsewhere, of Ellis's reprint, but it is remarkable that in the previous parts of that Chronicle, this construction does not occur.

In the *Confutacyon* of Tyndale's Aunswere, made anno 1532, by Syr Thomas More, p. 343 of the edition of 1557, I find this passage, "him have they sette on saynt *Mathis hys* even by the name of Saynt Thomas the Martyr"; and on p. 597, "for conclusion of *David hys* dedes." It is possible that the form of the possessive may, in these instances, have been changed by the editor, so as to accord with the new usage, but if genuine, they date further back than the examples from Fabyan's Chronicle.

An instance of the use of the *plural* possessive pronoun as the sign of the possessive case of a noun occurs in a letter written in 1528, and printed at page 44 of the Introduction to Bagster's English Hexapla: "I did promys him X l. sterling to prairie for my father & mother *there* sowles, and al cristen sowles." So in *A Breviate Touching the Order and Governements of a Nobleman's House*, 1665, published by the Royal Society of Antiquaries, Vol. XIII., p. 880: "He is to see into the baker and bruer *their* offices," &c.

Fuller, *Worthies*, II. 327, has: "Without the help of Ariadne *her* Clue of silk," &c.

These examples, indeed, prove nothing directly with regard to the origin of the possessive sign *s*, but these instances and those cited from Layamon, the *Morte d'Arthur*, Fabyan, and More, show that the possessive pronoun was, to some extent, regarded as the grammatical equivalent of the possessive sign, before the date of the English Liturgy.

Doubtless the number of such examples might be increased by further research, but they are too few and too much at variance with the almost universal usage of the language before the sixteenth century, and its known historical etymology, to serve as a foundation for a grammatical theory. If they are any thing more than accidental departures from the regular form, they, at

most, only prove that particular English writers confounded the possessive *pronoun* with the possessive *sign*. Even this conclusion is rendered less probable by the fact that no instance of the corresponding use of *her*, or, with the single exception which I have cited from the letter of 1528, of *their*, is known to occur until about 1560. Palsgrave expressly says that the possessive is formed by adding *s* (or *is*) to the noun; and he does not himself in any case employ the pronoun for this purpose, nor does Gil in his *Logonomia*, notice any but the inflected possessive. The apostrophe before the *s* in Robert of Gloucester was probably introduced to make the distinction between the possessive singular and the plural number, a device, which, when the new plural form in *s* was hardly yet colloquially established, might be a convenience, if not a necessity.

Upon the whole, then, I think we are authorized to say that the theory which makes the possessive *sign s* a derivative or contraction of the possessive pronoun *his*, in English etymology, is without historical evidence or probable analogy to support it.

I regret that I have been unable to consult two articles mentioned by Sir F. Madden, in the Glossarial Remarks to Layamon, Vol. III., p. 451, one in the Critical Review for 1777, vol. XLIII., p. 10, the other in the Cambridge Phil. Museum, Vol. II., as a simple reference to them might perhaps have saved a discussion which the statement of Latham and the opinions of some other grammarians seemed to render necessary.

LECTURE XIX.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS AFFECTED BY THE ART OF PRINTING.

I.

THE material conditions to which the art of book-making in all its branches is subject, have not only been powerfully instrumental in the modification of single words, and in determining those minor questions upon which the ready and commodious use of a written or printed volume depends, but they have exerted an important influence upon the more general forms of literature, and even upon the character and tendency of mental action. Let me illustrate by a comparison between the ancient and modern methods of recording the processes and results of human thought. The oldest manuscripts have scarcely a single point of resemblance to modern books. The Latin word *volumen*, (whence our *volume*), derived from the verb *volvo*, *I turn* or *roll*, indicates the most usual form of the ancient book. It was a long, narrow roll of parchment or papyrus generally divided transversely into pages or columns, the words written closely together without any separation by spaces, without distinctive forms of letters, capitals being employed for all purposes alike, without marks of punctuation, without divisions of chapters, paragraphs, or periods, and frequently made still more illegible by complicated and obscure abbreviations or contractions of whole syllables, or even words, into a single character. The modern book* is an assemblage of leaves,

* It may not be here irrelevant to make a remark or two on the etymology of the Latin and English words for *book*. *Volumen*, derived as I have just said from *volvo*, is a younger and less common Latin name for *book* than either *liber*, the generic term for all books, or *codex*, properly the specific designation of manuscripts composed of leaves of any material, while *volumen* was the appellation of the roll. The word *liber*, (whence our *library*), originally signifying the inner bark of trees, was applied to books, because bark was one of the earliest materials on which the Latin people

of convenient form and dimensions, securely united at one edge, with pages regularly numbered, impressed with characters of different but fixed forms, according to their several uses, words separated by spaces, members of the periods, and the periods themselves distinguished by appropriate points, and the whole cut up into paragraphs, sections, and chapters, according to the natural divisions of the subject, or the convenience of the writer, printer, or reader, and, finally, abundantly provided with explanatory notes and references, and ample tables of contents and indexes. Ancient manuscripts were, as a rule, without notes, but copyists or later possessors sometimes introduced in the margin explanatory glosses. Conventional signs or characters were also sometimes made use of by way of notes.

To an unpractised eye, however familiar with the individual characters, an ancient manuscript or inscription presents but a confused and indistinct succession of letters, and no little practice is required to enable us readily to group these letters into syllables, the syllables into words, and to combine the words into separate periods. Indeed, the accidental omission of a space in printing between two successive words in our own language sometimes

wrote. *Codex*, or *caudex*, whence our *code*, signifies the trunk or stem of a tree. Thin tablets of wood, split from the stem and covered with a layer of wax, at a very early period supplied the place of the more modern papyrus, parchment and paper, the writing being inscribed upon the wax with a hard point or style.

The Gothic tribes also used slips of wood for the same purpose, and the wood of the *beech* being found best adapted for writing-tablets, its primitive name (in Anglo-Saxon, *boc*,) became the designation of the most important object formed from it, and hence our English *book*, and the German *Buch*. According to Weigand this was originally *Buchslab*, because the Runic signs used for lots or prophecies were carved on twigs or slips of nut-bearing trees, and especially of the beech. It is a probable suggestion, that the form now universally adopted for the book owes its origin to the employment of wood or of leaden tablets in this way. Slips of wood could not well make a roll, and if connected at all, they would naturally be gathered like leaves of modern paper. The Upsal copy of the *Mæso-Gothic* translation of the Gospels, generally known as the *Codex Argenteus*—believed to be of the fifth, or beginning of the sixth century, and one of the oldest parchments existing—is written on leaves of vellum arranged in book-fashion, as are also most of the Greek and Latin manuscripts now extant, the superior convenience of that form having led to its general adoption not far from the commencement of the Christian era, though the *Herculæan* and *Egyptian papyri* are all rolls.

seriously embarrasses us, and if a whole sentence were thus printed, we should find it almost as unintelligible as a complicated cipher.*

An ancient scholar, on the other hand, would be hardly less puzzled, were he to be asked to read a composition, even of his own, divided and arranged according to the rules of modern typography. He would be distracted with the variety of characters, capitals, small letters, and italics, with the multiplicity of marks of punctuation, and the shattering of the periods into fragmentary members; perplexed with the often illogical divisions of the sentences and chapters, and embarrassed by the constant recurrence of references and annotations, all which would seem to him to serve little other purpose than to break the continuity of argument or narration, and to divert the attention of the reader from closely following the thoughts of his author. We may find an illustration of this in the unhappy dislocation and confusion of the Scripture narratives, by the division into chapter and verse, so injudiciously made at an early period and unwisely followed in all the later translations. A striking instance of the confusion caused by these divisions will be found in the Book of Joshua, Chaps. v. vi. By separating these chapters, the fact that the 1st verse of chap. vi. is merely parenthetical is not noticed, and, consequently, the identity of the 'captain of the Lord's host' in verses 14 and 15 of chap. v., and of the speaker in verse 2d of chap. vi., is entirely lost sight of. The Book of Isaiah has also suffered greatly in its prophetic unity from these purely mechanical divisions, and indeed if we read the Gospels as they were written, each as a continuous whole, we gain a very different impression from that derived from perusing them as we habitually

* The following sentence from Fuller's *Worthies*, Vol. I., p. 59, will serve to show the difficulty of reading an unbroken succession of words :

ITWILLPOSETHEBESTCLERKTOREADYEATOSPPELLTHATDEEDWHEREINSSENTENC
ESCLAUSESWORDSandLETTERSAREWITHOUTPOINTSORSSTOPBALLCONTINUEDTOG
ETHER.

Even now advertisements are sometimes thus printed to attract attention, as for example :

LUXURIANTWHISKERSMOUSTACHIOS,&c. — All young men should send name and address to Mr. Latreille, Lorrimore-street, Walworth, and receive free of charge full particulars of the only preparation which has proved itself a produce of whiskers and moustachios together with five hundred testimonials from persons who have used the article.

do, in fragmentary sections and periods. In fact, the restoration of the ancient integrity of form, is almost the only change which most scholars would willingly see made in our English New Testament.

Manuscript, indeed, even in our own language, can never be read in the thoughtless, half-mechanical way, in which we skim over the pages of a modern romance, or the columns of a newspaper, for the finest, clearest, and most uniform chirography falls short of the regularity and easy legibility of typography, and the highest compliment we can pay a hand-writing is to say that it reads like print.*

The Oriental nations, whose manuscripts resemble those of the ancients in wanting capitals, italics, and punctuation, are leisurely readers, and as they follow the writing with the eye, they very frequently articulate the words, or at least move the lips, as we are apt to do in deciphering a difficult chirography. Indeed, such is the difficulty of reading manuscript so penned, that in cases where etiquette or other reasons require a written instead of a verbal message, the letter is sometimes accompanied by a reader to explain its purport to the recipient. A curious passage in the Confessions of St. Augustine seems to imply that the ancients usually articulated the words in their private reading; for it is remarked as a noteworthy particular in the habits of St. Ambrose, that he read by the eye alone, when engaged in private study.†

* The press of the day reports that the Chancellor Bismarck refused to accept a present of German books printed in Roman letter, alleging that they were less easily read than the monkish character commonly employed in Germany. This must have been a mere concession to a foolish national prejudice. The individual letters of the character commonly used in Germany, are almost as ill-discriminated as are the Armenian, and they are very destructive to the eyesight. It is true that long practice enables a German to decipher these crooked and confused signs more readily than a stranger can do, but, other things being equal, persons alike familiar with both sets of characters, can read books printed in the common Roman alphabet with far greater facility than when its mediæval representative is used. In scientific treatises the Germans themselves are fast abandoning this ungraceful type, and adopting the simpler forms generally used in Europe.

† Do we ordinarily think by audible images of spoken words, or by visual ones of their written representatives? I have speculated much on this subject, and have found in my own case that the answer must depend on my personal habits at the time. When I read many hours a day, I find that my thoughts

“When Ambrose was reading,” says Augustine, “his eye passed over the page, and his mind searched out the sense of his author, but his organs of speech were silent. We often saw him studying in this inaudible way, and never otherwise, and we supposed that he feared, that if he read aloud, he should be interrupted by those who heard him with questions about the meaning of obscure passages; or, perhaps, the desire of sparing his voice, which was easily fatigued, was a still better reason for this silent study.” *

But the ancient habits of thought were wholly irreconcilable with the inconsecutive, discontinuous style of relation or discussion and expression so prevalent in our time. Sententious, indeed, and highly elliptical the classical writers often were, but the thoughts were nevertheless consequent, and logically connected, though some links of the chain might be left to the reader's sagacity to supply. Besides this, the fullness of the ancient inflections was a sure guide through the intricacies of the most involved period, and hence the Greeks and Romans did not require those multiplied helps to easy reading which shallow thinking demands, and the habitual use of which so weakens the intelligence, that a constant craving for additional facilities is felt, and every year adds some new device for relieving the brain, at the expense of the eyesight, in the mechanical arrangement of recorded words. That this ocular dissection, this material anatomy of language, has had an important influence on our modern European tongues, and on the current of the thought of which those languages are the vehicles, there is little doubt. It is true, that in the decline of ancient literature, the convenience of such devices, superfluous in more intellectual ages, began to be felt, especially in the reading of older authors whose dialect was be-

are a mental reproduction of written words; at other times they are a succession of imaginary sounds. The deaf and dumb think by signs, or rather by mental images of signs, and I have been told by a distinguished teacher of these unfortunates that he himself habitually thought in the sign language, and that his own children could follow his thoughts, when he was in a 'brown study' by observing his incipient but unconscious sign movements—just as we often read the thoughts of those around us in the unconscious motions of their lips.

* Conf. Lib. vi., § 3.

coming more or less obsolete. The invention of many of them is due to the Alexandrian grammarians, a school of critics and commentators who occupied themselves much with the elucidation of the earlier Greek writers, and who are said to have introduced the Greek accents, and some other points, to facilitate the teaching of the language to foreigners, as well as the instruction of the young in reading. Their obvious adaptation to this purpose naturally secured them a ready reception in primary schools and higher seminaries; and in fact, as we learn from Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the difficulty of learning to read manuscript was so great, that it was necessary for the pupil to receive some grammatical instruction before taking reading lessons, obviously to enable him the more readily to separate an unbroken period into its component words. "We begin," says Dionysius (*de Admir. vi dic. in Demosthene, 52*), "by committing to memory the *names* of the elements of speech called letters."* "After learning these *names*, we are taught the *forms* and *powers* of the single letters, then their combination into syllables, and the conditions which affect syllables. Having mastered these elements, we learn the parts of speech, such as nouns, verbs, conjunctions, and the like; and when we are able to distinguish these, *then* we begin to write and to read, pronouncing the words slowly at first, and syllable

* Athenæus, citing Callias, (*X., 79, p. 453*.) informs us that the names of the letters, and even the spelling of syllables, were arranged metrically, doubtless as a help to the memory.

Ἐστ' ἄλφα, βῆτα, γάμμα, δέλτα, θεοῦ παρ' εἰ, &c.

See Becker, *Charicles, II., 33.*

Many attempts have been made to trace or to divine the history of alphabets, but in general with very doubtful success, and whatever the origin of alphabets may have been, they, and all other pictorial representations of articulate sounds, must be considered as now purely arbitrary. The Cherokee Guest's remarkable alphabet for writing his native tongue was composed of letters and other characters which he found in American books and newspapers; but as he had never learned to read, the values that he assigned to those characters had no relation to their force in English. His alphabet was syllabic, and the structure of the Cherokee language is such that *eighty-three* symbols sufficed to express all the syllabic combinations of elementary sounds in that speech. That Guest, in selecting particular symbols as representative of special sounds, was guided by some obscure or fancied analogy between the sign and the articulation, cannot be doubted; but as the detailed history of the invention perished with the inventor, we cannot now trace the successive steps of the mental processes followed by him.

by syllable, until rendered familiar by practice." The introduction of marks of punctuation into Latin manuscript was specially favored by the inflexible character of the Latin language, which inexorably demands a periodic structure, and, like a true pedagogue, pedantically insists that the reader shall parse every word, in order to master the sentence. Once employed, they become indispensable. Beginning with air-bladders, we never learn to swim without them. Every parenthesis must have its landmarks, every turn of phrase its finger-post. We think by commas, semicolons, and periods, and the free movements of a Demosthenes or a Thucydides are as unlike the measured, balanced tread of a modern orator or historical narrator, as is the flight of an eagle to the lock-step of a prison convict, or to the march of a well-drilled soldier, who can plant his foot only at the tap of the drum.* We are not content with a punctuation which marks the beginning and end of a period, separates its members, and distinguishes parenthetical qualifications. We require that it shall indicate the rhetorical character of the sentence. If it is vocative, ejaculatory, optative, interjectional, it must hoist an exclamation-point as a signal. If it is hypothetical or interrogative, it must announce itself by a mark of interrogation; and the Spaniards carry the point so far that, in their typography, these signs precede as well as follow the sentence.

There is a necessity, or at least an apology, for the use of punctuation in most modern languages, English especially, but which applies with less force to Greek and Latin.† I refer to the otherwise inevitable obscurity of long sentences, in languages where the relations of the constituent words are not determined by inflection but almost wholly by position. The use of commas, semicolons, and brackets, supplies the place of inflections, and enables us to introduce, without danger of equivocation, qualifications, illustrations, and parenthetical limitations, which, with our English syntax, would render a long period almost unintelligible

* See p. 70 *ante*, note.

† Even in Latin we may notice that the meaning is sometimes left doubtful where our modern device of Italicizing would have made it perfectly clear. Take for instance the following extract from Julian, *Misopogon*: "Ego olim eram in hibernis apud caram Lutetiam [sic] enim Galli Parisiorum oppidum appellat." Is it *caram* or *Lutetiam* that is to be emphasized here?

unless its members were divided by marks of punctuation. Without this auxiliary, we should be obliged to make our written style much more disjointed than it now is, the sentences would be cut up into a multitude of distinct propositions, and the leading thought consequently often separated from its incidents and its adjuncts. The practice of thus framing our written style cannot but materially influence our use of language as a medium of unspoken thought, and, of course, our habits of intellectual conception and ratiocination. It is an advantage of no mean importance to be able to grasp, in one grammatical expression, a general truth, with the necessary limitations, qualifications, and conditions which its practical application requires and the habitual omission of which characterizes the shallow thinker; and hence the involution and concentration of thought and style, which punctuation facilitates, are valuable as antidotes to the many distracting influences of modern social life. On the other hand, the principles of punctuation are subtle, and an exact logical training is requisite for the just application of them. A perfect punctuation would represent natural pauses, and would be as properly a part of orthography as are letters which represent sounds. The same remark applies to accent. Naturally, then, mistakes in the use of points, as of all the elements of language written or spoken, are frequent, so much so in fact, that, in the construction of private contracts and even of statutes, judicial tribunals do not much regard punctuation, and some eminent jurists have thought that legislative enactments and public documents should be without it. As a guide to the intonation in reading aloud, in a language which has so few grammatical landmarks as English, it is invaluable; for it is as true in our days as it was in Chaucer's, that—

A reader that pointeth ill

A good sentence may oft spill.

The art of printing has its special conditions and limitations, which have affected language in a variety of ways. Every person who writes for publication finds that the form and arrangement of his matter must often be controlled by what are called 'printer's reasons'; and similar considerations of mechanical necessity, convenience, routine, or prejudice, exert a still more important influence on questions of punctuation, orthography, and

even expression. The matter of the writer, or 'copy,' as it is technically called, must be accommodated to the space to be filled, and abridged or extended accordingly. If you volunteer to enlighten your fellow-citizens through the pages of a *Daily*, you may be told that but half a column can be spared for your article, and you must consent to cut down your lucubrations to that standard, or allow them to be printed in a crowded and microscopic type. If you are a regular contributor to a magazine or a newspaper, you may be called upon to extemporize twenty lines of small pica, or to decide which stanza of your poem shall be omitted, that it may not overrun the page; and when you publish a book, you may be requested to confine your preliminary tête-à-tête with your reader to the exact limits of the printer's 'form.'

In the early history of printing, books sometimes underwent strange changes from analogous causes. Fonts of type were often so small that a large volume was necessarily distributed among several offices to be printed. It would in this case be impossible to determine precisely how many printed pages a given quantity of manuscript would fill, and of course the printer who took the latter portion of the copy, must labor under a good deal of uncertainty as to the paging and signatures of his sheets. Hence, there would sometimes occur a considerable break between the last page of the first part, and the first page of the second, and this must either be left with an unseemly and suspicious blank or filled up with new or extraneous matter. Thus, in John Smith's *Generall Historie of Virginia*, 1624, there occurred in this way a hiatus of ten pages, and the author partially fills it with complimentary verses addressed to him by several friends, making this apology for their introduction :

"Now seeing there is this much Paper here to spare, that you should not be altogether cloyed with Prose; such Verses as my worthy Friends bestowed upon New England, I here present you, because with honestie I can neither reject nor omit their courtesies."

In like manner the editor of Fuller's *Worthies*, published in 1662, excuses the irregularity of the paging by saying that, "the discounting of Sheets to expedite the work at severall Prccses hath occasioned the often mistake of the Folios"; and in Abel Redi-

vivus, 1651, an erroneous computation, as to the space which manuscript would require, compelled the leaving of ten folios unpagged between page 440 and page 441, from which point another press had undertaken the printing. Like blanks may be observed in ancient manuscripts, and they often seem to have been filled up by subsequent possessors with wholly irrelevant matter.*

It is, however, mainly in smaller matters, that the mechanical influence of the press is most conspicuous, if not most important. Not only what in the nomenclature of the art are called 'forms'—that is, the number of pages inclosed in a single frame and printed at one operation on one piece of paper—but the dimensions of the page, and, in printing prose, the length of the lines also, are inflexible, and our equally rigid characters cannot be crowded, superposed, or indefinitely extended by lengthening their horizontal lines,† as they are in Oriental books, to fit them to the breadth of the page, but if there is a deficiency or an excess of matter, something must be added or omitted. Modern ingenuity, it is true, has contrived methods of accommodation, or, to use a word characteristic of our times, of compromise, by which appearances may often be saved without a too palpable sacrifice of the author's, or rather printer's, principles of orthography and punctuation. But, at a somewhat earlier stage of the art, the convenience of the compositor overruled all things, and in spite of the improvements to which I have just alluded, there are few writers who do not even now sometimes suffer from the despotism of that redoubtable official.

At the period when our language was in a more flux and unsettled condition, and the press was a less flexible instrument, if the words of the manuscript did not correspond exactly to the length of a line, and the difficulty could not be remedied by the insertion or omission of printer's spaces, without leaving staring blanks or a crowded condition of the words at once distasteful to a typographic eye and perplexing to the reader, a comma might be dropped or introduced, a capital exchanged for a small letter,

* See Wattenbach, *Hand-Schriften-Kunde*, p. 254.

† In the *Malmantile Racquistato*, Florence, 1688, and in the curious lying Life of the Jesuit Anchieta, Rome, 1788, the letters *a*, *e*, and *n*, are elongated by a horizontal stroke at bottom when necessary to fill a space.

or vice versâ. So if the author used a word the spelling of which was not well settled, (and all modern orthography was doubtful three hundred years ago,) a letter or two might be added or omitted, to give it the proper length. This is the explanation of much of the irregular orthography which occurs in the older, and sometimes in more recent, editions of printed books. The ingenuity of more modern printers, as I have already observed, has devised methods of removing or greatly lessening this embarrassment, chiefly by the dexterous use of spaces; and the convenience of spelling and punctuating according to a uniform standard so greatly overbalances the difficulty of accommodating the matter to the page, that authors now complain, not that the printer's orthography is too variable, but that it is tyrannically inflexible. Landor, in his second conversation between Johnson and Tooke, tells us that Hume's orthography was overruled by his printers. He wrote the preterites and past participles of the weak verbs with a *t* final, as Milton did, as, for example, *lookt* for *looked*, but in his printed works, the compositor and publisher would suffer no such departure from the established laws of the chapel. An eminent French philological writer, when accused of violating his own principles of orthography in one of his printed essays, thus replies: "It was not I that printed my essay, it was Mr. Didot. Now Mr. Didot, I confess it with pain, is not of my opinion with regard to the spelling of certain plurals, and I cannot oblige him to print against his conscience and his habits. You know that every printing office has its rules, its fixed system, from which it will not consent to depart. For example, I think the present fashion of punctuation detestable, because the points are multiplied to ridiculous excess. Well, I attempt to prove this by precept and example, and the very printers who publish my argument scatter points over it, as if they were shaken out of a pepper-box. It is their way. What would you have! They will print my *theory* only on condition that I will submit to their *practice*." *

The early printers were very often learned men, and had therefore a much better right to control the orthography of their authors than have those of our day, who are seldom competent to form any opinion on the subject, except so far as regards the con-

* Génin, *Récollections Philologiques*, I. 855.

venience of their art, or rather their trade. The old typographers indeed seem to have exercised supreme authority on this point, and even as late as near the beginning of the seventeenth century Rosweyde* submitted implicitly to their control.

Habits of spelling soon became fixed. A bad speller cannot accurately copy a well-spelled manuscript, and if the apprentices in an office were not rigorously trained to an invariable system of spelling, the trouble they would occasion the proof-reader would be endless. Experience has shown that nothing is more difficult than to obtain an accurate reprint of an old edition, or the publishing of an old manuscript with the original orthography; and this is one reason why so many of the most valuable sources of information respecting the early forms and history of our language have never been made accessible by the press, and why later editors have rendered so many sterling old authors wholly valueless for all philological purposes, by changing or disguising their meaning, in the foolish attempt to fit them to the taste of the vulgar reader by modernizing their spelling, and by conforming their supposed erroneous grammar to the practice of the hour. A writer of the present day, who quotes a couplet of Chaucer, must expect that the printer will reform the orthography according to the latest edition of Webster, and if, in the indulgence of a passion for the archaic and the venerable, he venture to employ an old-fashioned form or an obsolescent word, the compositor, pitying his presumed ignorance or want of taste, will charitably amend the 'copy,' by substituting a word of a more current coinage. If, as has happened to the writer, he jestingly apply to a youth the old Euphuistic appellation of a *juvenal*, the printer will change his antiquated substantive into the adjective *juvenile*, and if he sing of a 'griely ghost,' he may find his awe-inspiring, but somewhat vague epithet, rendered more precisely descriptive by being printed with two *z*.†

Eminent printers usually adopt some popular dictionary as a standard, and they allow the writers for whom they print no

* After professing to have adhered very strictly to his texts in spite of barbarisms and solecisms, he says: "Adverte secundo, orthographiæ eam servatam rationem, quam Typographus optimam judicavit." *Prolegomena in Viles Patrum*. P. lxxxv., Ed. 1638.

† See two translations from Matthisson in the *Whig Review* for 1845.

deviation from this authoritative canon. The dictionaries selected are often works of no real philological merit. The aim of their authors has been, not to present the language as it is, as the conjoined influence of uncontrollable circumstances and learned labor has made it, but as, according to their crude notions, it ought to be. Every word-collector aspires to be a reformer, and the corrections of popular orthography are more frequently based on false analogies and mistaken etymologies or erroneous principles of phonology, than founded in sound philological scholarship. In language, form is indistinguishable from substance, or rather is substance. The dictionary-maker and the printer, who lord it over the form of our words, control the grammar of our language, and the philosophy of its structure; they suggest wrong etymologies and thereby give a new shade of meaning to words; and in short, exert over speech a sway not less absolute or more conducive to the interests of good taste and truth in language, than that which the *modiste* possesses in the fashion of dress.*

It must be admitted that the licenses of which I complain are older than the art of printing. Professional scribes, in ancient times and in the Middle Ages, habitually conformed the manuscripts they copied to the orthographical and grammatical standard of their own times, and they regularly changed every obsolete or obscure word or form of expression for something more agreeable to the taste, or less enigmatical to the intelligence of their contemporaries. They often corrected supposed errors in names, dates, facts, or if, instead of venturing upon absolute change, they more conscientiously inserted an explanatory gloss or conjectural emendation in the margin, a later copyist would incorporate the note or correction into the text. In manuscripts written in languages still spoken when a given copy † was made,

* Caxton, in the title-page to his edition of Higden, (I am obliged to quote from a modernized version,) says the Chronicle was "Imprinted by William Caxton, after having somewhat changed the rude and old English, that is to wit, certain words which in these days be neither used nor understanden." And in another place: "And now at this time simply imprinted and set in form by me, William Caxton, and a little embellished from the old making."

† The etymology of *copy* presents a striking instance of the extravagances into which inquirers, whose study of languages is confined to grammars and

we can never expect a near conformity to the words of the author, unless the writing is an original, or at least a contemporaneous transcript; and in the latter case, if the penman happened to be of a different province from that of the writer, dialectic differences are almost sure to occur. Thus, the oldest manuscripts of Petrarch and Dante, and other Italian writers, seldom fail to betray the birthplace of the copyist, by the shibboleth of his local dialect. In like manner, when we compare manuscripts of the same work copied in successive centuries, we can trace the changes of the language almost as distinctly as in different original compositions of the corresponding periods.*

We find an additional proof of the frequency and extent of the license indulged in by ancient copyists, in the comparison of the dialect of monumental inscriptions with that of literary works which have come down from the same periods. Our classical manuscripts, excepting those found at Herculaneum, and in a few instances in Egyptian mummy-cases, are all comparatively modern. The forms of language in Greek and Latin inscriptions are generally much more archaic than in our copies of

dictionaries, run, when they seek the origin of words, not in their history as traced in actual literature, but in resemblances gathered from lexicons. I find it stated in a well-known dictionary, that *copy* is from *cope*, in the sense of *likeness*. Under *cope* no such meaning is given, the nearest approach to it being, "to exchange or barter," but *cope* is said to be allied to the Arabic *kafai*, to be equal, to be like.

Cope, in the sense of exchanging or buying, is neither more nor less than the Anglo-Saxon *ceapian*, to *chaffer*, bargain or trade, whence also our *chapman* and *cheap*. *Copy* is the Latin *copia*, signifying first, abundance, then facility or convenience, whence the phrase *copia m facere alicujus*, to furnish, grant, or communicate any thing, from which latter form came the sense of "making a *copy*," as a mode of *communicating* a writing.

* The manuscripts of Piers Ploughman vary so widely, that Whitaker could explain the discrepancies only by the supposition of a rifacimento by the author himself, at a considerably later period, when his opinions had undergone important changes; but a comparison of Whitaker's and Wright's texts reveals so wide differences in grammar, vocabulary, and orthography, that it is quite unreasonable to refer the two recensions to one writer, and it is by no means improbable that both are very unlike the author's original.

It is supposed that the two manuscripts of Layamon, so well edited by Sir F. Madden, do not differ more than half a century in their ages, but the departures of the later from the earlier text are too great to be accounted for, except by imputing to the copyist very great license in transcription.

the works of contemporaneous writers. It is true, that something of the difference is to be ascribed to the influence of what is called the lapidary style, and its consecrated standards of orthography and expression. Inscriptions engraved on marble or on brass are necessarily brief, laconic, elliptical, and the rigidity of these materials produced on old monumental writings effects analogous, in some respects, to those of the mechanical conditions of printing upon modern literature. Other differences are accounted for by the ignorance of the stone-cutters; but after all, it is not probable that inscriptions commemorating the public acts of officers of high rank, or other important events, and of course executed under a responsible inspection, would differ very widely from the current grammatical forms or orthography of their time, and hence we must infer that copyists and editors have made considerable changes in the manuscripts they published. The professional scribes at Rome and Athens were often slaves, and, in the former city, no doubt generally much better educated than their masters. The booksellers kept numbers of such servile scribes, and many copies of a book were made at once, some one reading the manuscript aloud, and the penmen writing it down. Under such circumstances, independently of any deliberate purpose of modernizing or correcting the author, persons writing by the ear from dictation * would inevitably reduce the work, whether old or new, to the standard orthography of the time, which they certainly might do with quite as good right as have editors in the nineteenth century to mangle and disguise good old authors, for the purpose of making them more intelligible to a public which they suppose as ignorant as themselves.

From all these circumstances, it is evident that nothing can assure us of possessing the *ipsissima verba* of an old writer but a comparison with the original manuscript, or one which has passed the author's revision. Happily for the interests of literature, early English writers did not always trust their works to the ten-

* The reader will find in Goethe's *Nachgelassene Werke*, B. V. S. 106, an amusing and instructive article on this subject, entitled *Hör-Schreib- und Druckfehler*.

See also Wattenbach, *Handschrift-Kunde*.

der mercies of the scribe with the superb indifference which Shakespeare is reported to have shown. Chaucer scrupulously revised the copies of his works, as appears from this address to his scribe :

Adam Scrivener, if ever it thee befall,
Boece or Troilus for to write new,
Under thy long locks thou maist have the scall,
But after my making thou write more trew.*
So oft a day I mote thy werke renew,
It to correct and eke to rubbe and scrape,
And all is thorow thy negligence and rape.

* Trench, *Select Glossary*, under *Make, Maker*, states that these words, "as applied to the exercise of the poet's art," and "as equivalent to poet," "are not found in any book anterior to the revival of the study of the Greek literature and language in England." It will hardly be said that the study of Greek was revived in England before the Reformation, or, in any event, in the fourteenth century. In the lines quoted from Chaucer, in the text, I think *making* must be used in this sense, as also by the same poet in several other passages; as, for example, in these verses from the conclusion of the complaint of Mars and Venus, which have been quoted for another purpose, on p. 501 :

And eke to me it is a great penaunce,
Sith rime in English hath soch scarcite
To folow, word by word, the curiosite
Of Graunson, flour of hem that *maks* in Fraunce.

There are several similar instances in the Legend of Good Women. Thus :

Alas, that I ne had English rime, or prose
Suffisaunt, this floure to praise aright,
But helpeth, ye that han conning and might,
Ye lovers, that can *make* of sentement !

The lines that follow these are entirely decisive as to the meaning of *make* in this passage, if indeed those just quoted leave any room for doubt.

Again :

The man hath served you of his conninges,
And forthred well your law in his *makinges*,
All be it that he can not well endite.

So also

He shal never more agilten in this wise,
But shal *maken* as ye woll devise,
Of women trewe in loving al hir life.

And,

But now I charge thee, upon thy life,
That in thy legende thou *make* of this wife,
Whan thou hast other smale *ymade* before.

In Robert de Brunne's Prologue to his Chronicle, Hearne's ed., p. xcix, I find,

I *mad* nought for no discours,
Ne for no seggers, no harpours, &c. ;

The author of the *Ormulum*, one of the most interesting and valuable relics of our old literature, the original manuscript of which, written with a systematic uniformity of orthography very remarkable in the thirteenth century, is yet extant, gives this charge to the copyists who might attempt the multiplication of his work :

& whase wilenn shall þiss boc
 Effit operr siþe writenn,
 Himm bidde icc þat het write riht,
 Swa summ þiss boc himm tæcheþþ,
 All þwerrt ut afterr þatt itt iss
 Uppo þiss firrste bisne,
 Wiþþ all swilic rime alls her iss sett,
 Wiþþ all se fele wordess ;
 & tatt he loke wel þatt he
 An bocstaff write twiyyess,
 Eyywhær þær itt uppo þiss boc
 Iss writenn o þatt wise.
 Loke he well þatt het write swa,
 Forr he ne mayy nohht elles
 Onn Ennglissh writenn riht te word
 þatt wite he wel to soþe.

and on p. c.,

þat may þou here in Sir Tristrem,
 Ouer gestes it has þe steem,
 Ouer all þat is or was,
 If men it sayd as *made* Thomas, &c. ;

also on p. cl.,

For þis *makyng* I wille no mede,
 Bot gude prayere, when ye it rede.

In *Piers Ploughman*, *Vision*, verse 7470, we have :

And thow medlest with *makynges*
 And myghtest go saye thi Sauter ;

and in verse 7488,

To solacen hym some tyme,
 As I do whan I *make*.

Make occurs, in the same sense, in the *Confessio Amantis* of Gower, Paull's ed., vol. iil., 384 :

My muse doth me for to wite
 And saith, it shall be for my beste,
 Fro this day forth to take reste,
 That I no more of love *make*, &c.

See also notes to vol. i., of Dyce's edition of Skelton, p. 186, and passages there cited.

Or, in more modern English :

And whoso willet this my book
To write again hereafter,
Him bid I, that he write it right,
So as this book him teacheth,
Throughout according as it is
In this the first example,
With all such rhythm as here is set,
With words, eke, just so many ;
And let him look to it, that he
Write twice each single letter,
Wherever it, in this my book,
In that wise is ywritten.
Look he well that he write it so,
For otherwise he may not
In English write the words aright,
That, wete he well, is soothfast.

It is one of the most interesting questions in all literature, how far the original text of Shakespeare has suffered from the license, the negligence, or the indolence of those who, with type and pen, have multiplied his works. The dispute is likely to be a long one, and if Collier's folio does not prove the existence of myriads of errors in the current editions, it at least shows an alarming boldness of commentators in the way of conjectural emendation.

LECTURE XX.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS AFFECTED BY THE ART OF PRINTING.

II.

THERE are circumstances peculiar to the history of English literature, which have rendered the mechanical conditions and imperfections of the typographical art more powerfully influential upon the language itself, than was elsewhere, in general, the case. Caxton, the first English printer, was indeed both an Englishman by birth and a man of scholarly attainments, but he acquired the art at Cologne, and it is probable, though not certain, that his first production, "The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye," was printed either at Cologne or at Bruges. When he established his press at Westminster soon after the year 1470, he brought over workmen from the continent, and, were stronger evidence wanting, the names of his successors, Lettou and Machlinia, Wynkyn de Worde, Pynson, Berthelette, Faques, Treveris, would sufficiently indicate that they also were of foreign birth. Indeed it appears from Strype's *Memoirs of Cranmer*,* that as late as 1537, the printers in England were generally "Dutchmen that could neither speak nor write true English," and when Grafton applied for an exclusive privilege for the translation of the Bible which goes by his name, he represented that "for covetousness' sake, these foreign printers would not employ learned Englishmen to oversee and correct their work," so that, as he complains, "paper, letter, ink, and correction would be all naught." Three years later, Grafton asked permission to print the Bible at Paris, where he says that not only could he procure better and cheaper paper, but that the workmen were more skil-

* See Southey's *Common Place Book*, Vol. II.

ful. Any one, who has had occasion to print so much as a familiar quotation in a foreign tongue, can judge whether a volume printed in a language unknown to the compositor would be likely to prove very correct. Besides this, it must be remembered that the art of calligraphy had been less cultivated in England than on the continent, that the characters in common use differed somewhat from those employed in the other European languages, and that the contractions and abbreviations stood, of course, for different combinations of sounds or letters. An instance of this is the employment of þ and ð for the two sounds of *th*, in the Anglo-Saxon and Old-English alphabets, a trace of which long remained in the confounding of þ with *y*. In black-letter, the character *y* much resembles the þ, and hence *y* was often used instead of it, and this gave rise to the forms *ye* for *the*, and *yt* for *that*. Thus many circumstances combined to make an English manuscript extremely illegible to a printer unacquainted with the language.

While in almost every Continental country, the early printers were generally learned men, and sometimes among the most eminent scholars of their time, the followers of Caxton were for nearly two centuries principally mere handicraftsmen, and typography fell far short both of the dignity and the artistic perfection to which it elsewhere attained almost immediately after its invention. For all these reasons it is obvious that early English printed books must have been very unfaithful copies of the manuscripts they attempted to reproduce, and the great incorrectness of their execution had a prejudicial effect upon the forms of the language and sometimes on the meaning and use of important words. There is a large class of words of Latin and French origin belonging to the dialect of books, and at first, of course, used exclusively by literary men who could not be ignorant of their etymology or true orthography, but which are found very vaguely spelled in the printed books of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Thus, the printers did not discriminate between *eminent* and *imminent*, *president* and *precedent*, *ingenuous* and *ingenious*, and these words were used or rather printed interchangeably almost to the beginning of the eighteenth century. A passage in Fuller, however, clearly marks the distinction between *ingenuousness* and *ingenuity* as then recognized, and it is not probable that scholars could ever have been insensi-

ble to the differences between all of them.* They must first have been confounded by typographical error. The confusion once introduced, educated men became involved in it, and it was long before the words and the ideas they expressed were disentangled from it.

Printed books, however incorrect, would, from their greater legibility, always be preferred to manuscript, and their wide circulation would make them at once popular standards of authority in all matters of orthography and grammatical inflection. The confusion and irregularity of their spelling would accordingly powerfully tend to increase the uncertainty of orthography, especially at a period when the usage of the learned even was discordant, and the language still in process of formation. It is, no doubt, in these circumstances that we are to find the explanation of the otherwise paradoxical fact, that the spelling of the English language, as practised by educated persons in the fifteenth, and even the latter part of the fourteenth century, more nearly resembles that of the present day than do the printed books of the sixteenth century. The foreign printers ignorantly corrupted the spelling of their copy, and their books, again, the orthography of the nation.† In carefully executed recent editions, printed directly from very early manuscripts, we find a surprisingly close resemblance to the spelling of modern periods. In the best manuscripts of Chaucer, and more especially of Gower, and in some of the Paston Letters, as, for example, in a letter

* Though men understood *imperfectly* in this life, yet if all understood *equally imperfectly*, upon the supposition of equal *ingenuousness* to their *ingenuity*, (that is, that they would readily embrace what appears true unto them,) all would be of the same judgment. *Infant's Advocate*, Part II., p. 8.

Does Trench, in treating of desynonymised words, (*Study of Words*, Lecture V.,) mean to say that *ingenious*, (Latin *ingeniosus*, proximately from *ingenium*,) and *ingenious*, (Latin *ingenuus*, directly from the verbal root,) were ever really the same word?

† Et si, huic non absimile incommodum etiam accederet, ut prælo corrigendo non doctus præesset sed aliquis de grege mercatorum qui Germanicè et Anglicè loqui posset, corrupti necesse erat orthographiam nostram; et quia tempestiva medela adhibita non esset, in hominum usum corruptam transire. Atque hanc sane existimo unicam fuisse causam corruptelæ.

A. GIL. *Logonomia Anglica*, 2d edition, 1621.

Præfatio ad Lectorem.

of Lord Hastyngs written before the year 1480, we find indeed obsolete words, but the orthography of those which are still employed conforms more closely to the present standard than does that of the English Bible of 1611.* The original edition of that translation furnishes abundant illustrations of a practice to which I referred in the last lecture, that, namely, of clipping or lengthening words according to the space which it was convenient to give them in arranging the printed lines. Thus in Deuteronomy ix. 19, *hot* is spelt *whot*, because a long word was required to fill out the space; in Joshua ix. 12, Judges ii. 14, iii. 20, it is spelt *hote*, there being a smaller space to occupy, and in other passages, where the ordinary form *hot* was long enough, that spelling is employed. In verse 13, of chapter xiii. of Judges, *ye* and *we* are both printed with a single *e*, but in verse 15, of the same chapter, each with two *ee*. In verse 2 of chapter xv., the second person singular, imperfect tense of the verb to *have*, is spelt *haddest*, in Genesis xxx. 30, *hadst*. In Genesis xxxi. 8, the future of the substantive verb to *be* is printed *shall bee*, with two *ll* and two *ee*; but in chapter xxx., verse 33, it is printed in one word, *shalbe*, and both these forms occur in verse 17 of chapter xlii. of Isaiah.† So in the life of Reynolds in Abel Redivivus, in one

* See letter from Lord Hastyngs, Paston Letters, II., 296. Pauli, in the Introductory Essay to his edition of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, London, 1857, states, that he has adopted the "judicious and consistent orthography" of a manuscript probably of the end of the fourteenth century, "as the basis for the spelling in this new edition." He also describes the orthography of a manuscript of the same author, of the fifteenth century, as having "been carried through almost rigorously according to simple and reasonable principles." Pauli's text is founded on an edition by Berthelette, of the year 1532, but conformed in its orthography to the first manuscript above mentioned. Berthelette printed from an edition by Caxton, but substituted the dialect and spelling of his own time, and carried the process of modernization still farther in a subsequent edition. In that from which Pauli printed, the "orthography and metre had been disturbed in innumerable places by Berthelette," and he observes that in the oldest manuscripts, the promiscuous use of *y* and *i*, *u* and *v*, so common in all old English printed books, does not occur. The spelling of Pauli's edition, thus restored to its original integrity, is, in a very large proportion of the words, identical with that of the present day.

† The following fac-simile from one of the two editions of 1611, shows the arrangement of two lines of the verse referred to, and the reason for it:

17	C They shall bee *turned backe,	
	they shalbe greatly ashamed, that trust	

sentence *college* and *knowledge* are spelt without the *e* final, but in the next period, both words with it. These, and many more among the thousand similar variations in which early printed English books abound, were occasioned by the necessity of conforming the length of the words to the space that could be spared for them. The double forms *toward* and *towards*, which occur in King James's Bible, are explained in the same way, as also the employment or omission of the final *s* in other words of the same ending in other English books of that century. It should, however, be here observed, that, in all the words ending in *-ward*, which are used in the first editions of that translation, with the exception of *towards* and *afterwards*, the *s* is constantly omitted, according to what seems to be the fashionable modern usage; though, as I think, the *s* final ought to be retained in employing words with this ending as adverbs or prepositions, and dropped when they serve as adjectives. One of the most remarkable typographical licenses I have observed, occurs in the life of Abbot in Abel Redivivus, printed in 1651. At that period, our common title of address, *Mister*, was spelt, and doubtless pronounced, *Master*, and hence, though the same abbreviation was used for the address as at present, namely *Mr.*, the two significations of the word were liable to be confounded. The author of the life in question speaks of a particular work, as 'Abbot's master-piece,' but the printer, for want of space, has printed the abbreviation *Mr.*, instead of the whole word *master*. A like example occurs in a letter from Harrington to Prince Henry in the *Nugæ Antiquæ*. In printing poetry, where the verses are seldom long enough to extend across the whole breadth of the page, the same necessity of adapting the words to the space did not exist, and hence it is, that the spelling in old printed poems is sometimes more uniform than in contemporaneous prose. In old editions of Chaucer, we find the orthography of the versified portions less irregular than that of the Tale of Melibœus, and of the Persones Tale, both of which are in prose. It should, however, be remembered, that, in poetry, there existed a totally different cause of irregularity, not connected with the mechanical laws of the press. I refer to the necessities of metre. The final *e* of words with that termination was in Chaucer's time usually pronounced, at least in verse, as it still is in French poetry, and ac-

cordingly where not strictly inflectional, it was employed or dropped according to metrical convenience. Besides this, at that period, the Saxon inflections had not become wholly obsolete, and early English writers used the *e* final, as a sign of the plural in adjectives, and verbs of the strong conjugation, which in our modern dialect admit no change of form in different numbers.

The near coincidence in time, between the Protestant Reformation and the general diffusion of the art of printing in Europe, together with the close analogy between the intellectual influences of both, makes it a matter of great difficulty in many cases to determine which of these two causes was most active in the production of particular effects; and especially, how far the change which the sixteenth century produced in all the European languages is to be ascribed to the one or the other of them. The year 1500 found the English language much as Chaucer and Wycliffe had left it; in the year 1600, it had nearly reached the point where it now stands, so far as concerns the dialects of the knowledges then cultivated, except in the vocabulary of the physical sciences. The Tale of Melibœus and the Persones Tale differ from the Morte d'Arthur, in Caxton's edition, only as English versions of moral and theological treatises in Latin would be expected to differ from an English translation of a French romantic fiction; but, independently of the coloring which each receives from these influences and from the nature of the subjects, the language will be found to be very nearly the same. But if we compare either of them with Hooker or Shakespeare, and again, the latter writers with the purest authors of the present day, we shall observe that the century between Caxton and Hooker effected as great changes as the two hundred and fifty years that have elapsed since that great writer flourished. Although printing was introduced into England about 1470, yet the productions of the press were not sufficiently numerous to exert much influence on the national mind or speech, until half a century later. During the sixteenth century, printing and the Reformation promoted each other, and their action upon thought and language was a concurrent one. Without attempting to define the relative weight of each, I may say that I think the most important single element, in producing the general effect of both upon the English language, was the diffusion of a knowledge of

classical literature, which printing made possible, and the Reformation made more desirable. The increased number and the reduced price of books in the Greek and Latin languages released classical literature from the confinement of the cloister, and private individuals of moderate means were now able to enjoy intellectual luxuries, which before had been accessible only to the wealth of monastic corporations. Manuscripts of the classics had been multiplied only for the exclusive use of those establishments, by monkish scribes who occupied their leisure hours in copying, or calligraphic and pictorial embellishment, of writings which had survived the wreck of yet more barbarous ages. The first tendency of this secularization of classic lore was undoubtedly unfavorable to the cultivation of the popular literature and the vernacular speech, but a reaction soon commenced, and a new literature sprung up in the vulgar languages, though fashioned upon ancient models, affecting a classical structure, and marked by a Latinized phraseology.

Until the end of the fifteenth century, it was only in the theological and moral departments that Latin had much direct influence upon English, most of the Latin roots introduced into it up to that time having been borrowed from the French ;* but as soon as the profane literature of Greece and Rome became known to English scholars through the press, a considerable influx of words drawn directly from the classics took place. The introduction of this element, like the infusion of fresh juice into ripened wine, produced a sort of fermentation in the English language, a strife between the new and the old, and both vocabulary and structure continued in a very unstable state until the end of the sixteenth century, when English became settled in nearly its present form. In the productions of Caxton's press, and indeed in the literature of the period down to and including the time of Lord Berners, whose translation of Froissart—perhaps the best English prose that had yet been written, and certainly the most delightful narrative work in the language—first appeared in 1523, it is scarcely possible to find a single word of Latin origin, belonging to the general vocabulary of English, whose form does not render it most probable that we received it through the French. A hun-

* Many of our verbs of Latin origin are derived directly from the participial form, and not through the French, as for example : *corrupt*, *instruct*, etc.

dred years later, on the contrary, we meet on every printed page, words either taken directly from the Latin, or, which is a very important point, if before existing in our literature, reformed in orthography so as to suggest their classical origin. There is even in Hooker an evident struggle between the two great elements of English, and in his hesitation between the Latin and the Saxon, or older English, he not unfrequently uses both, as for instance, "*nocive* or *hurtful* things," "unreasonable *cecity* and *blindness*," "*rectitude* or *straightness*," "*sense* and *meaning*"; and so, in Cotta's *Witchcraft*, "*heartened* and *encouraged*"; also, "*idleness* and *otiosity*," Preamble of a Statute of 24 Henry VIII., quoted by Froude.

The influence of printing upon the English language has been much extended and strengthened by two important circumstances, common to the two great countries of which it is the vernacular. The one is, that in neither does there exist, nor for two centuries has there existed, a censorship of the press, a previous authoritative examination of manuscript matter intended for the public; the other is, that public discussion of all questions in the departments of religion, of intellectual and moral philosophy, of politics, indeed of all topics affecting the great and permanent interests of man, is free and unrestricted. Hence the popular mind, the popular speech, in both countries are open to a class of influences, which, in most Continental States, are confined to the privileged and the professional alone. For the same reason, the dialects appropriated to the elucidation of all these great subjects have been very widely cultivated, and their vocabularies enlarged, so that our language has acquired a compass and an adaptability to an unlimited variety of uses which nothing but free speech and a free press could give to it. Late journals have stated that dramatic pieces designed for representation on the French stage were to be submitted to a censorship before acting, in order that *slang phrases* and other violations of the purity of language likely to offend academic ears might be struck out. We may easily imagine that the objects of such a censorship are rather political than literary, but in either case it could not fail to have a prejudicial influence on the character of speech, with which change and progress are as essentially connected as motion with the due performance of the organic functions of animal life.

The effect which the muzzling of the press and the consequent stifling of the free and public expression of opinion on theological questions have exerted on speech, may be seen by comparing the language of our English Bible and of English writings of a devotional character generally, with that of similar works in the tongues of Central and Southern Europe. In none of these latter does there exist a special and well-defined religious dialect. Technical words for theological ideas, indeed, they have, but no phraseology so marked in its composition and structure as to constitute an appropriate religious diction. The same thing is true, to nearly the same extent, of the general political vocabulary of the Continent,* though, on the other hand, the comparatively little occasion for the employment of English in diplomacy has left our language more undeveloped and incomplete in that special department than in almost any other.

Although the letters of Junius, and some of the writings of Cobbett, subjected their publishers to criminal prosecution in England, yet the press was nevertheless substantially free, and it was only by means of a free press, that productions so bold in their political character, and so important in their literary influence, could have been given to the public. I speak without any reference to their moral or political merits or demerits; but it must be allowed that Junius did much to limit, Cobbett something to overthrow, the influence of the stilted Latinism of Johnson and his school, and to bring back the language, if not to a Saxon vocabulary, at least to an idiomatic grammatical structure.

The influence of printing on the English language has been modified and determined by the peculiar character and circumstances of the people, by whom and for whom the literature of England has been created.

The deliberate expression of human thought will always assume a form supposed to be adapted to the intelligence, the temper, the tastes, and the aims of those to whom it is addressed. He who speaks to an audience composed of men of one class, of one profession, of one party, or of one sect, will use a narrower vocabulary, a more restricted, or a more select dialect, than he who ex-

* The English word *meeting*, and even the derivative, *meetingai*, for those who attend a meeting, have become common words in the political vocabulary of Italy.

pects to be heard by a more various and comprehensive circle ; and a writer who appeals to a whole people, who seeks to convince the understanding, or enlist the sympathies of a nation, must adopt a diction, employ arguments, and resort to illustrations, which shall, in their turn, suit the comprehension and awaken the interest of men of every class and every calling. Whatever, therefore, is designed for the ear, or the perusal of what we call 'the enlightened public,' must be as miscellaneous in its composition as that public itself, and it can come home to the bosoms of all, only by using both the speech which is common to all, and somewhat of the special vocabulary which is peculiar to each. English, in its one dialect, for its literature knows but one, is the vernacular, not merely of a greater number, but of a greater variety of persons than any tongue ever used by man. It is spoken from the equator to near the ultimate limit of human habitation in either hemisphere, and, starting from the British capital, the geographical centre of the *solid* surface of the globe, it has followed a thousand radii to the utmost circumference. Especially is it found established upon all great lines of traffic and communication, at all great points of agricultural or mechanical production, and wherever human life exists in its most energetic, most restless, intensest forms, there it is the organ for the expression of all that belongs to man's dearest interests, widest sympathies, highest aspirations. It is, moreover, eminently the language of liberty, for, of those to whom it is native, by far the largest portion enjoy a degree of personal, social, political, and religious freedom never before possessed by humanity, upon a great scale. From all these circumstances, there are to be found among those who habitually use the English tongue, and are familiar with written language, if not a greater diversity of character, at least greater differences of interest and external condition, a more generally diffused culture, and a wider range of thought, than have ever before been united by one medium of communication. The press furnishes to every English writer the means, and suggests to him a motive, for bringing this vast and diversified assemblage, the representatives of every human interest, the embodiment of all human intelligence, all human passion, within the reach of his voice ; and in him, who, with even moderate abilities, writes from the heart and to the heart, it is no ex-

travagant aspiration to hope, that he shall be read amid the shivering frosts of the polar circle and the sweltering heat of the tropics, in lonely deserts and thickly peopled cities, upon silent prairies and by the shore of the loud-voiced ocean. The wings of British and American commerce scatter the productions of Anglo-Saxon genius over the habitable globe. The thunder of the great London journal reverberates through every clime, and the opinions of the New York press are quoted in every commercial port, in every political capital.

Thus, for the living author, English is what Latin and Greek are for the dead, a cosmopolite speech, whose range in comprehensiveness of space corresponds to the duration of the classical tongues in time; and if the voice of Athens and of Rome enjoys the longer echo, the words of the Anglican speaker are heard over the wider theatre.

Every man, therefore, who, in furtherance of the aims of generous scholarship, or in advocacy of any right or interest of humanity, addresses himself to the boundless audience reached through the medium of the Anglican press, is naturally inclined to use a comprehensive dialect, a wide variety of illustration, and clear and unequivocal forms of expression. Hence, the art of printing demands from its English and American patrons, not a multiplicity of words merely, but a style combining simplicity and catholicity of structure, conformity to the principles of universal grammar, and consequently a freedom from provincialisms and arbitrary idioms—intelligibility, in short—to a degree not required in the literature of any other age or race. There is another circumstance connected with the operations of the press, of a counteracting character so far as purity of expression is concerned, which much affects the habitual style of composition in our language. The general diffusion of intelligence among the English-speaking people has created not only a great multitude of readers, but, at the same time that it brings with it a wider diffusion of ability to produce, it encourages the efforts of a more than proportionate number of literary artisans. The rewards of authorship flowing through the press are now seductive beyond those won in any other field of human effort. A successful English writer enjoys a contemporaneous fame coextensive with civilization. His renown surpasses that of the soldier whose exploits

he immortalizes, his influence is greater than that of a premier, and he reaps a harvest of solid gains more certain and scarcely less abundant than that of the thriftiest merchant. The *London Times* divides among its managers and its contributors the revenues of a principality, parliamentary majorities and ministers shrink before its censures, and the potent Governor-General of British India bows to its untitled correspondent. Prizes so rich, so tempting, and seemingly so easy of attainment, will be eagerly sought by thousands of competitors. The harvest of fame and profit, praise and power, depends upon the extent of the circle in which it is to be reaped, the number, not the character, of the consumers, for whose use the commodity is prepared. None seek the audience 'fit though few,' that contented the ambition of Milton, and all writers for the press now measure their glory by their gains. Popular literature in all its forms is consequently in the ascendant. The novel of society, the magazine story, the poetic tale of easy rhyme and easy reading, the daily sheet, and especially the illustrated gazette, these are the bazaars where genius now offers itself for sale. The aim of a numerous class of popular writers is to reproduce, in permanent forms, the tone of light and easy conversation, to make books and journals speak the dialect of the saloon, and hence pungency of expression, innuendo, verbal wit, irony, banter, and raillery, trifling with serious interests, are the characteristics of what we call popular literature, and our language must have a vocabulary which accommodates itself to the taste of those whom such qualities of diction alone attract. In the periodical and fugitive department, scandal and personality are eminently acceptable, and nothing gives a pamphlet or a newspaper greater currency, than the dexterity with which, not fashionable vices, but private character, is anatomized and held up to scorn or ridicule. The point of satire lies in its individuality. Its victims must have a local habitation and a name. Sly allusion, semi-equivocal expression, and pointed insinuation, too well defined to leave its personal application doubtful, therefore, form a large part of the diction of journalistic articles relating to social life, while in political warfare, the boldest libels, the most undisguised grossness of abuse, alone suit the palate of heated partisanship. Hence, the dialect of personal vituperation, the rhetoric of malice in all its modifications, the

art of damning with faint praise, the sneer of contemptuous irony, the coarse epithets of vulgar hatred—all these have been sedulously cultivated, and, when combined with a certain flippancy of expression and ready command of a tolerably extensive vocabulary, they are enough to make the fortune of any sharp, shallow, unprincipled journalist, who is content with the fame and the pelf which the unscrupulous use of such accomplishments can hardly fail to secure.

The periodical press is unquestionably the channel through which the art of printing puts forth its most powerful influence on language, and it seems remarkable, that periodicals, which have existed in England since the reign of James I., should scarcely have produced an appreciable effect upon the English tongue, until they had been a hundred years in operation. The establishment of daily newspapers and of literary journals was nearly contemporaneous, and dates from an early period in the eighteenth century, but though the *Tattler*, the *Spectator*, and the *Guardian* had a comparatively large circulation, and exerted a great influence upon the dialect of their time, yet the newspaper can scarcely be said to have had a place in literature until the success of the letters of Junius, which appeared in the *Morning Advertiser* from 1769 to 1772, gave to that class of periodicals an ascendancy which it has ever since maintained. It may now fairly be said, that there is no agency through which man acts more powerfully upon the mind of his fellow-man, and the influence of the art of printing upon language and thought has reached its acme in the daily newspaper.

The influence of the periodical press upon the purity of language must be admitted to have proved hitherto, upon the whole, a deleterious one, and countries, where, as in England and America, the press is free and periodicals consequently numerous, are particularly exposed to this source of corruption. The newspaper press has indeed rendered some service to language, by giving to it a greater flexibility of structure, from the necessity of finding popular and intelligible forms of expression for every class of subjects, and it has now and then preserved, for the permanent vocabulary of our speech, a happy and forcible popular word or phrase, which would otherwise have been forgotten with the occasion that gave it birth.* But these advantages are a very in-

* It is interesting to notice how a felicitous expression, distinctly embody

adequate compensation for the mischiefs resulting from the slovenliness and inaccuracy inseparable from the necessity or hasty composition upon a great variety of subjects, themselves often very imperfectly understood by the writer. Editors naturally seek to accommodate their style to the capacity and taste of the largest circle of readers, and in their estimate of their public, they are very apt to aim below the mark, and thus gradually to deprave, rather than elevate and refine, the taste of those whom they address. Hence arise the inflated diction, the straining after effect, the use of cant phrases, and of such expressions as not only fall in with, but tend to aggravate, the prevalent evil humors and proclivities of the time, the hyperbolical tone in which they commend their patrons or the candidates of their party, and, in short, all the vices of exaggeration of style and language. There is, however, of late years, a great improvement in the literary character of the English and American newspapers. The *London Times*, whatever may be thought of its moral or political tendencies, has long employed writers of surpassing ability, and its example has done much to elevate the tone of editorial journalism in both the countries which employ its language. The pet phrases of hack journalists, the euphemism that but lately characterized the American newspapers, are fast giving place to less affected and more appropriate forms of expression. It is only the lowest class of *Dailies* that still regard 'woman' as not an honorable or respectful designation of the sex, and it is in their columns alone, that, in place of "well-dressed" or "handsome women," we read of "elegantly attired females," and of "beautiful ladies." The Anglican newspaper is now—what the French journal long has been—an intellectual organ, an authority for cultivated circles in politics, in letters, in æsthetics. Besides this, it is the popular guide and instructor for evil and for good, and it may truly be said to be the feature most characteristic of the life and literature of Anglo-Saxon humanity in the present age.

ing some common prejudice or common conviction which the unlettered have not, till then, been able to formulate, will be seized upon by the masses, and will really help them to clearer thought and juster judgment on the subject under discussion. At the same time it must be admitted that the effect of such striking formularies is not always an unmixed intellectual or moral gain. They not unfrequently serve, in minds of a certain character, to crystallize an error, so that no amount of argument, however conclusive at the moment, can ever really destroy it.

LECTURE XXI.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS AFFECTED BY THE ART OF PRINTING.

III.

ON a former occasion, I spoke of the diffusion of classical literature in modern Europe—the first great result of the invention of printing—as having much enlarged the English and other European vocabularies, by the introduction of new words derived from Greek and Latin roots. But the revival of learning was not unaccompanied with effects prejudicial to the cultivation of the modern languages, and to their employment for the higher purposes of literature. At that period, most of them were poor in vocabulary, rude and equivocal in syntax, unsettled in orthography, distracted with variety of dialect, and unmelodious in articulation. Under such circumstances, nothing could be more natural than that scholars imbued with the elegance, the power, the majesty of the ancient tongues and of the immortal works which adorned them, should have preferred to employ, as a vehicle for their own thoughts, a language which the church had everywhere diffused, and which was already fitted to express the highest conceptions of the human intellect, the most splendid images of the human fancy. He who wrote in Latin had the civilized world for his public; he who used a modern tongue could only count as readers the people of his province, or at most of a comparatively narrow sovereignty. Until, therefore, by a slow and gradual process, the necessity of sympathy and intellectual communication between the learned and the ignorant, had enriched the vernacular tongues with numerous words from the dialects of theology, and ethics, and law, and literature, but few scholars ventured to employ so humble a medium. To write in the vulgar speech was a humiliation, a degradation of the thought and its author, and literary works in the modern tongues were generally prefaced with an apology for appearing in so mean a dress.

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The close analogy between Latin and its Romance descendants much facilitated the enrichment of the dialects of Southern Europe, but in England and the Continental Gothic nations, the stimulus of the Reformation was necessary to furnish an adequate motive and a sufficient impulse for a corresponding improvement in the respective languages of those peoples.

Even so late as 1544, after so many great names had ennobled the speech of England, Ascham, writing on the familiar and popular subject of Archery, says, that it "would have been both more profitable for his study, and also more honest for his name, to have written in another tongue."

"As for the Latine or Greeke tongue," continues he, "everye thinge is so excellentlye done in them, that none can do better. In the Englishe tongue, contrary, everye thinge in a manner so meanlye both for the matter and handelinge, that no man can do worse. For therein the least learned, for the most part, have bene alwayes most readye to write. And they which had least hope in Latine, have been most bould in Englishe; when surelye everye man that is most readye to talke, is not most able to write."*

One of the most obvious modes in which the art of printing has affected language, is, that by the cheapness and consequent multiplication of books, and by the greater uniformity and legibility of its characters, it has made reading much easier of acquisition, and thus allowed to a larger proportion of those who use a given language access to its highest standards of propriety and elegance. Of course, the effects of thus bringing books within the reach of a larger class will be measured, as between different countries, by the comparative extent to which literature is really diffused in them, and where the press is most active and least restricted, there the greatest number of the people will learn to comprehend and use the language of books, and there the average standard of correctness of speech will be relatively highest.

The same circumstances, independently of the superior inducements to authorship of which I have already spoken, will tend to increase the number of aspirants for literary fame, for where all read, many will feel and obey the impulse to write. The abun-

* Preface to *Toxophilus*.

dant rivalries thus created in every field of intellectual effort are doubtless a great incentive to the attainment of superior excellence in composition, but, on the other hand, the fear of anticipation, and the haste to reap the solid rewards of successful authorship, concur to promote a rapidity of production which is inevitably associated with some negligence in point of form. I cannot but think that a perhaps unconscious sense (if that phrase does not involve a contradiction) of the necessity of rapid production, had some influence in prompting the advice given to young writers by authors so unlike as Cobbett and Niebuhr. "Never think of mending what you write; let it go; no patching," says Cobbett, in his strong English. "Endeavor," says Niebuhr, "never to strike out any thing of what you have once written down. Punish yourself by allowing once or twice some thing to pass, though you see you might give it better." And even Gibbon habitually conformed to the same rule, however little trace of it his highly artificial style betrays.* That this method has its advantages as a means of enforcing caution in the use of words is doubtless true, and perhaps he, who, like most modern writers, aims only to influence the opinion of the hour, may advantageously use the popular dialect, which will usually most readily suggest itself to him who writes for popular effect. But whatever may be the influence of the practice on the writer himself, however it may affect his position with his contemporaries, it cannot but have a prejudicial result as respects the idiom of the language, and the permanence of the works which are composed in it. Upon these points, the experience and judgment of all literature are to the contrary of the rule. The revamping of our own writings, indeed, after an interval so long that the mental status in which we composed them is forgotten, and cannot be conjured up and revived, is a dangerous experiment, but literary biography fur-

* It has always been my practice to cast a long paragraph in a single mould, to try it by my ear, to deposit it in my memory, but to suspend the action of the pen till I had given the last polish to my work.—Gibbon, *Memoirs*, Chap. ix.

And in chapter x., speaking of his history, he says, "My first rough manuscript, without any intermediate copy, has been sent to the press."

It appears from Ticknor's *Life of Prescott*, that the latter carried this practice so far as to be able to compose mentally *sixty pages* of his historical works, which he would dictate to an amanuensis at a single sitting.

nishes the most abundant proofs, that, in all ages, the works which stand as types of language and composition, have been of slow and laborious production, and have undergone the most careful and repeated revision and emendation.* Especially is this true with regard to the oratorical dialect. Great practice, strong passion, and a fervid imagination may confer the gift of unstudied eloquence, but the orations which after-ages read with applause are almost never the result of unpremeditated effort. Celebrated speakers prepare their *impromptus* beforehand to an extent incredible to those who are not familiar with their habits, or, at the least, they make them, by subsequent revision, very different in diction from the volley of winged words which the excitement of debate may have shot forth. Demosthenes, the greatest master of eloquence whose works remain in a written form, never ventured to address an audience without laborious preparation, and we know from the younger Pliny, that the Roman advocates of his time carefully studied their speeches before delivery, and scrupulously corrected and amplified them in writing them out afterwards.

In recent times, the press has become what the Senate and the Forum were in the old republics, but the rapid movement of modern society is unfavorable to the leisurely execution, the finish and completeness of literary works, and, of course, to polish and accuracy of language. He who writes for a fickle, a restless, or a progressive public, must take the tide at its flow, and if he follows the Horatian precept, and spends nine years in the elaboration and recension of his book, or in pausing to allow

* Not to speak of the endless *limas labor* of ancient classic literature, perfection of manner has been attained by modern writers only by similar methods. The stylistic ability of an author must always be estimated with reference to the innate power of expression possessed by the language he uses. Thus tried, Pascal and Paul Louis Courier are by far the greatest stylists of modern times, and we have no English writer who can compare with either, in perfect adaptation of the expression to the thought, or in flowing ease and gracefulness of diction. This excellence in both cases was the fruit of the most ceaseless and persevering labor in revision and correction. Marvellous as is the perfection of Goethe's style, he does not always impress you with the conviction that he has exhausted the utmost resources of his native tongue, and it is remarkable that one of his most felicitously expressed productions is a translation from the French—the Rameau's Nephew of Diderot—in which the fluent beauty of the original is admirably rendered, with little sacrifice of the German idiom.

himself time for cool criticism, he will find that he comes too late. The world in its swift advancement has already passed far beyond him.

The universality of literature, brought about through its general popularization by the press, has not only given birth to a more numerous class of producers, but has made it much more truly an expression or exponent of the mind and tendencies of the time and people, than in the ages which preceded the invention of printing. In every country of the civilized world, there is a manifest drift in some particular direction, and literary effort of all sorts feels the impulse of the current. The perpetual, all-embracing inter-communication between mind and mind, through the press, stamps upon all the same tendencies, the same course of thought, the same proximate conclusions. Society is more intensely social. Men are become more deeply imbued with the spirit of a common humanity, and know and participate in each other's intellectual condition. There is a remarkable proof of this in the perpetually repeated instances of concurrent mental action between unconnected individuals. Not only does almost every new mechanical contrivance originate with half a dozen different inventors at the same moment, but the same thing is true of literary creation. If you conceive a striking thought, a beautiful image, an apposite illustration, which you know to be original with yourself, and delay for a twelvemonth to vindicate your priority of claim by putting it on record, you will find a dozen scattered authors simultaneously uttering the same thing. There are in the human mind unfathomable depths, out of which gush, unbidden, the well-springs of poesy and of thought; there are mines, unilluminated even by the lamp of consciousness, where the intellect toils in silent, sleepless seclusion, and sends up, by invisible machinery, the ore of hidden veins, to be smelted and refined in the light of open day. The press, which has done so much to reveal man to man and thereby to promote the reciprocal action of each upon his fellow, has established new sympathies between even these mysterious abysses of our wonderful and fearful being, and thus contributed to bring about a oneness of character which unmistakably manifests itself in oneness of thought and oneness of speech.

The law of copyright, though we have evidence in Martial and

other writers that ancient authors were sometimes paid by booksellers for their works, is a result of the art of printing, and could be of little value without it. It has rendered no other service to literature than the very doubtful one of furnishing a pecuniary inducement to literary effort. The privilege of copyright was not originally granted as a reward and stimulus to authorship, but as a protection to the printer against a dangerous competition, for it extended as well to editions of the classics as to contemporaneous productions, and of course the benefit to authors was but incidental. In fact, it is but lately that it could have operated at all as a reward to English writers, for until the last century, the price of the copyright of original English works was in general hardly as much as the cost of the paper on which they were written. The Continental booksellers seem to have paid more liberally a century previous.* At this day, it may be doubted whether a single work of permanent value, in the literature of any living language, owes its existence to the protection afforded by law. Books which are composed only because they will sell, are swiftly written, swiftly read, and, as they deserve, swiftly forgotten, while those which are destined to produce a deep and lasting impression, scarcely win their way to popular favor and an authoritative position, until the privilege of copyright has expired by legal limitation. There are abuses connected with this privilege, which are highly detrimental to the interests of literature. The exclusive right of printing a particular book is, in the hands of wealthy publishers, a means of preventing the publication of other and perhaps better books on the same subject, and thus that which ought to be an encouragement to effort, is made to operate so as to discountenance the attempts of rivals in the same field. The proprietor of a book, which, from its nature, as a dictionary or a school-book, is largely in demand, will supply booksellers with his wares only upon condition that they will sell no rival work. A combination between three

* He took nothing of Printers for his copies, as he writeth, saying: "I have no plenty of money, and thus yet I deale with the Printers; I receive nothing from them for recompense of my many copies. Sometimes I receive of them one copy. This I thinke is due to me, whereas other writers, yea translators, for every eight leaves, have an angel."—*Life of Luther, Abel Rediviv.*, p. 48.

or four large publishing houses, each having its own copyrights, may thus exclude from sale one set of books and force another upon the market with very little regard to the opinion of competent judges as to the merits of either. Besides this, most of the Reviews, and to some extent the newspapers, are controlled by book-publishers, and thus criticism is forestalled, and an artificial public opinion created, which not only gives currency to inferior productions, and bestows upon their authors the rewards which excellence alone ought to secure, but vitiates the taste of the age, and lowers the standard of composition, by holding up as models for imitation, writings which deserve only to be pointed at as examples to be shunned.

Southey, in his Colloquies, makes the remarkable statement, that "one of the first effects of printing was to make proud men look upon learning as disgraced, by being thus brought within reach of the common people." "When laymen in humble life," continues he, "were enabled to procure books, the pride of the aristocracy took an absurd course, insomuch that at one time it was deemed derogatory to a nobleman if he could read or write. Even scholars themselves complained that the reputation of learning, and the respect due to it, and its rewards, were lowered when it was thrown open to all men. Even in this island, ignorance was for some generations considered to be a mark of distinction, by which a man of gentle birth chose, not unfrequently, to make it apparent that he was no more obliged to live by the toil of his brain, than by the sweat of his brow."

The feeling which Southey ascribes to the "pride of the aristocracy," was really an effect of ecclesiastical jealousy. There is little evidence to show that the aristocracy were more deplorably ignorant after the introduction of printing than before, but there is abundant proof that the new art was regarded with dislike by the church, when employed for any purpose but the multiplication and cheapening of the Latin books required for the use of the clergy themselves. To the same cause we are to ascribe the fact, often noticed as a singular one, that Caxton printed very few religious books. Sir Thomas More expressly declares, that Caxton refrained from printing the Bible in English, because he feared that the penalties, ordained by Archbishop Arundel for copying or using Wycliffe's Bible, would be corruptly and illegal-

ly enforced against *any* English translation of the sacred volume. For such religious books in Latin as would have been allowed to be printed, there was fortunately little demand in England, and to the great benefit of the English language and literature, Caxton was not only left free, but obliged, to confine the operations of his press almost wholly to the publishing of English books. The English priests, themselves, were at that period as ignorant as are those of the Oriental churches at the present moment. We learn from Fuller, that early in Queen Elizabeth's reign the clergy were ordered to con over the lessons by themselves once or twice before every service, in order that they might be able to read them fluently to the congregation.

The art of printing, especially since its wide employment by the periodical press, has been a most influential agency in extirpating local peculiarities of dialect, and producing the general uniformity with which the English language is spoken and written wherever it is used at all. Persons who study our American speech cannot fail to notice, that there is among us a tendency to pronounce words, and especially proper names, more in accordance with their orthography, and to make fewer exceptions to general rules, than in England. The most obvious, though not the only cause of this, is the universality of the ability to read and write, which modern society in free countries owes to the art of printing. Where all read, most persons first become acquainted with the names of distant localities, of eminent persons, and of new objects, through the press, and not by the ear. Names so learned will of course be pronounced according to the regular orthoepy of the language, and thus a general pronunciation, often very discordant from the local one, becomes established. In the case of foreign words, proper or common, we are prepared to find, among persons acquainted only with English, as the mass of those to whom that language is vernacular necessarily must be, a pronunciation of such names widely different from the native articulation. However repulsive, therefore, such distortions of names may be to those familiar with them in their original orthoepy, we are not surprised to hear the name of the great bankers of Europe popularly pronounced *Röthchöld*, or American artists, of foreign extraction, spoken of respectively, as *Röth-ermel*, and *Gotts-chalk*. Indeed, a strict conformity to the native

pronunciation of names, belonging to languages whose orthographical system differs much from our own, is generally considered an offensive affectation, and a great British orator, who was as familiar with French as with English, is said to have been so scrupulous on this point, that, in his parliamentary speeches, he habitually spoke of an important French port as the city of *Bordeaux*. In England, the names of families and of towns are often very strangely corrupted, not in vulgar pronunciation alone, but by the general usage of the highest classes. Thus the originally French name, now naturalized in England and America, which is spelt (and with us pronounced) *Beauchamp*, is in England called *Beecham*; *Belvoir* is *Beever*; *Saint John*, *Sinjon*; *Cholmondeley*, *Chumley*; *Cirencester*, *Siseter*, and *Alexander Gill* tells us that in his time *Daubridge-court* was pronounced *Dabscot*. Some of these corruptions, at least, are old ones, for *Froissart*, who, as a foreigner, spelt English names by the ear, writing about the year 1400, uses *Sussetour* for *Cirencester*, and *Beachame* for *Beauchamp*. Even as late as 1651, I find *Montgomery* spelt in *Abel Redivivus Mungumry*.* The original orthography of all these names is now recovered, and strangers, finding them in books of travel and newspapers, will of course pronounce them as they are spelled. So strong, indeed, is the tendency in this country to confirm orthography and speech, that in some instances the spelling of English names has been altered to suit the family and neighborhood pronunciation. An example of this is found in a name which is written and pronounced differently, *Kirkland*, *Cartland*, and *Catlin*, by different branches of the family and in different localities, though *Kirkland* is doubtless the original form of all of them. A similar instance may be noted in *Campbell*, *Kimball*, *Kemble*. So the name *Worcester* has, in some of the families that bear it, been conformed to a loose pronunciation, and is spelt *Wooster*. These changes in spelling American family names were made at an early day, when, though the ability to read was as general as now, yet books and newspapers, and of course the opportunities for reading, were much fewer. At present, the tend-

* The *Saxon Chronicle*, MXCv., also has *Mungumry*, and *Henry of Huntington*, *Mungumeris*. In this word and the like the *t* is now felt by the speaker, if not heard by the auditor. Will it not be distinctly heard by the next generation in England, as it is even now often heard in America?

ency is in the opposite direction, and many corrupted names have been restored both to the original spelling and orthoepy. In England, changes of either sort are made with somewhat greater difficulty, but there too, since the multiplication of railroads, and since names, formerly less frequently seen in a written form, are constantly recurring in newspapers, railway tables, and the like, and of course oftener used by strangers to the local orthoepy and by them pronounced as written, there is observed an evident tendency, even in the natives of towns hitherto so oddly miscalled, to accommodate the spoken form to the orthography, and to restore the names to their ancient fulness of articulation. Thus, in the case of names widely disseminated by printing, the distant popular majority, who know the word only by its spelling, are carrying the day over the neighboring few who have learned it by the ear, and the letter is likely at last to triumph, and bring back the tongue to the primitive or an approximate pronunciation. A reform of this nature, supported as it is by the constantly increasing influence of the press, cannot stop with mere names, and a few years will probably free spoken English from some of that clipping, crowding, and confusion of syllables,* which three centuries ago led Charles V. to compare it to the whistling of birds, and which, in its modern exaggerated form, is a still more disagreeable peculiarity of its pronunciation.

The same causes have produced similar effects in other countries, and persons familiar with Continental phonology cannot but observe a growing inclination to give a fuller utterance to obscure sounds, and to articulate letters hitherto unpronounced, or, if sounds have been irrecoverably lost, to omit the letters which once expressed them. This is most readily noticeable in French, because the number of silent letters is greater in that

* There were current in English, as late as the 17th century, many synopated phrases which have almost wholly disappeared since reading and writing have become general. Two of these are mentioned in the French grammar prefixed to Cotgrave's French-English Dictionary, 1650, *Section of Consonants*,—*muchkiditti*, for, *much good may it doe to you*; and *Godigodin*, for, *God give you good evening*. So *Godge*, for, *God give you (or ye)*; *dick*, for, *do it you (or ye)*; both which, when their origin was forgotten, were followed by another pronoun or other objective, as *Godge you good morrow*, *Much good dick thy good heart*. Even in Italy, clear as is the usual articulation, we hear such expressions as *cido*, for the complimentary phrase, *schiauo suo*.

than in any other European language, and a comparison of recent and older works on French pronunciation will show that final and radical consonants are now, according to the best usage, articulated in many cases where they were formerly silent. Palsgrave, whose French Grammar was printed in 1530, speaking of French pronunciation, says, "What consonantes soever they write in any worde for the keypyng of trewe orthographie, yet so moche covyt they in redyng or spekyng to have all theyr vowelles and dipthongues clerly herde, that betwene two vowelles, whether they chauce in one worde alone, or as one worde fortuneth to folowe after another, they never sounde but one consonant at ones, in so moche that, if two different consonantes, that is to say, not beyng both of one sorte, come together betweene two vowelles, they leve the fyrst of them unsounded." He then gives a list of one hundred and nine words, where *s* preceding another consonant is pronounced, as exceptions to the general rule. It appears from Beza that there were some other exceptions, but he also recognizes the rule. Printing, and the consequent diffusion of a grammatical knowledge of the language, have had the effect, first, of expelling from the orthography a portion of these silent consonants, and secondly, of changing the pronunciation and bringing it more into accordance with the spelling, by introducing the articulation of consonants formerly 'unsounded.' This double process is still going on, and we may venture to predict, that the spelling and the orthoepy of French will be much less irreconcilable a century hence than they are at present.*

* Palsgrave gives the figured pronunciation of a few sentences and single words by way of illustrating his rules. In these examples the following words occur :

dicton,	figured pronunciation,	diton.
<i>adjuger,</i>	“ “	<i>ajuger.</i>
<i>multitude,</i>	“ “	<i>moutitude.</i>
<i>substance,</i>	“ “	<i>sustance.</i>
<i>scoulture (sculpture),</i>	“ “	<i>scouture.</i>
<i>mortel,</i>	“ “	<i>morté.</i>
<i>destiner,</i>	“ “	<i>détiner.</i>
<i>lequel,</i>	“ “	<i>leké.</i>
<i>election,</i>	“ “	<i>elesion.</i>
<i>céleste,</i>	“ “	<i>célete.</i>

Palsgrave, 23, 60, 62.

In 1701, *croire* was pronounced *erere*. See Littré *in v. croire*.

According to the same authority, Hist. XI. Siècle, Vol. 2, p. 907, *roi* was

I have shown, in a former lecture, that the mechanical difficulties of the art of printing at first tended to increase the existing confusion and uncertainty of English orthography; but after these difficulties were overcome, as they seem to have been soon after the publication of the first editions of King James's Bible, the influence of printing was in the contrary direction, and our spelling has within two hundred years undergone far fewer and less important changes than our vocabulary. In both these particulars, the art is now eminently conservative; in the former, merely sustaining that which has once become established, but in the latter both preserving the old and freely admitting the new. With so large a number of public libraries usually well secured against destruction by negligence or violence, scarcely any book can become absolutely extinct; and every word, once introduced into our printed literature, may fairly be said to have become imperishable. We find in old authors many words now disused, and others which are wholly unintelligible. These, in some instances, turn out to be typographical errors, but the industry of etymologists is continually discovering the meaning of old words not hitherto understood, and reviving obsolete or obsolescent expressions, which the revolutions of time and circumstance have again made needful or convenient. Thus the boast of printing, that it is the art which is the general conservator of all arts,

both spelled and pronounced *rei*, and the orthography was altered *before* the change in pronunciation took place.

Génin, a very high authority in French philology, observes:

“Aujourd'hui il n'est pas un petit commis de magasin qui ne se pique de faire sonner les liaisons quand il raisonne sur *l'ar t-antique*, ou se plaint d'avoir *froi t-aux pieds*, ou s'accuse avec fatuité de *ses lor z-entrer z-elle*.”

The tendency to pronounce the final consonants (which is but a single case of the rehabilitation of disfranchised letters in French phonology) is ascribed by Génin to the influence of the theatre, where the articulation of consonants in *liaisons*, partly for metrical reasons and partly for the sake of distinctness, has always been practised in versified dramas. Génin *Réc. Phil.* II. 425, 427.

Doubtless in Paris, and in France at large, the influence of the theatre on such questions is very great; but, as the corresponding change in English articulation is clearly traceable, not to theatrical practice, but to the diffusion of letters, I cannot but suppose that like effects in France may be, in great part at least, ascribed to the same cause.

On the subject of changes in French pronunciation, see also Pelissier, *Langue Française*, pp. 161, 266-7.

proves eminently true with respect to speech, which may be considered as an art, in so far as it is an acquired, not a purely spontaneous, self-developing faculty.

Printing has conferred an important benefit on language, by multiplying, and putting within the reach of every man, books of a class which, when literature existed only in a written form, were rarer than those of almost any other character. I refer to dictionaries, and other works of the comprehensive and encyclopædic class, which, although they cannot be said to owe their existence to printing, yet could never have obtained a general circulation without it. We know that ancient literature possessed works of this kind, but they were so little multiplied, that scarcely any of them have come down to us; nor did lexicography make a progress correspondent with that of other departments of knowledge, until after the art of printing had been long employed in the diffusion of general literature.

The multiplication and improvement of dictionaries are matters especially important to the general comprehension of English, both because of its great copiousness, and more particularly on account of the multifarious character of its sources, and its little facility of derivation and composition. Languages which, like Greek and German, are derived by simple and easily understood rules from a comparatively small number of roots, contain few words not intelligible to those acquainted with their familiar and constantly recurring rudiments. For instance, the common German-English dictionaries contain about two hundred words compounded of *h a l b*, the equivalent of our English *half*, and some other equally familiar root, the meaning of every one of which compounds is immediately obvious to every German. In Webster, I find fewer than fifty compounds into which our *half* enters, its place being taken in other words by the Greek *h e m i*, the Latin *s e m i*, the French *d e m i*, and the Italian *m e z z o*, all of which are unmeaning to the Englishman, and their explanations must be sought in dictionaries. Although, therefore, from the former low state of philological learning in England and America, our lexicography is far behind that of most Continental nations, yet no modern language so essentially requires the aid of dictionaries as the English.

Printing has also introduced a multitude of other facilities for

the convenient use of books, such, for example, as indexes. Two copies of the same manuscript, especially if written by different persons, would never correspond, line for line, or even page for page, and, of course, an index prepared for one copy would not answer as a guide to a given passage in another. To prepare a separate index for each manuscript would be a work of hardly less labor and cost than to rewrite the whole copy, and the consequence was that indexes scarcely existed at all, and learned men were obliged to rely upon their memories alone, when they wished to refer to a particular passage in the works of an author.* Accordingly, the ancients introduced quotations, with no other indication of their source than the name of the author, or at most the book, from which they were taken. But the very want of these facilities had its advantages, for writers would be more likely to accustom themselves to a natural and logical arrangement of the divisions and subdivisions of their subject, when they knew that a reader could have no mere mechanical means of obtaining a general view of it. Books were anciently written to be read, *studied*,

* Pliny's Natural History is one of the few ancient books which have come down to us with even a Table of Contents. The author concludes his Dedication to Vespasian with this reference to his Table, as translated by Holland, London, 1601: "Now to conclude and knit up mine epistle: knowing as I doe, that for the good of the commonweale, you should be spared and not impeached by any privat businesse of your owne, and namely in perusing these long volumes of mine; to prevent this trouble, therefore, I have adioyned immediately to this epistle and prefixed before these books, the summarie or contents of everie one: and verie carefully have I endeavoured that you should not need to read them throughout, whereby all others also, after your example, may ease themselves of the like labour; and as any man is desirous to know this or that, he may seeke and readily find in what place to meet with the same. This learned I of Valerius Sorranus, one of our owne Latin writers, who hath done the like before me and set an Index to those Books which he entituled *εποκτιδων*."

The Table begins with a statement of the general subject of each book; and as a ready method of finding the books, the initial words of each are given, nothing being referred to by number of *page*. Then follows a specific list of the subjects discussed in the several books, an estimate of the number of particular facts recorded, and the names of the authors cited as authorities.

Of course, verbal indexes and concordances, which modern critical scholars (with the exception of the Germans who at least compel their readers to do without them for the most part) find so useful, must have been much rarer than Tables of Contents, and even these, it is evident from the remarks of Pliny, were little known in his time.

to be, as Thucydides has it, "a possession forever," not to amuse an idle hour, or at best to be consulted upon special occasion, as one looks out a word in a dictionary.

There are other facilities of research and of criticism connected with the legibility of letterpress, which are of no trifling advantage to the scholar. Suppose he wishes to find, in a particular author, a passage to which he has not an exact reference, or that he is seeking exemplifications of the use of a given word or phrase, in order to determine its meaning or syntactical character by the authority of good writers; the eye, which takes in a page at a glance, will run through a printed volume, and discover the passage or the word sought for, in the time which would be required to decipher half a dozen columns of manuscript. Again, let an author who has carefully elaborated his composition and given it the finishing touches, revise it in letterpress, and how will the errors, the repetitions, the negligences, which a dozen perusals in manuscript had failed to detect, stare him in the face as monstrous and palpable delinquencies! So, the compression of matter, which printing allows, is a thing of very great convenience. True it is, that in the days of ancient calligraphy, minute writing was brought to such perfection that, as is easily shown by calculation, Cicero's story of the *Iliad*, which could be carried in a nutshell, is not in the slightest degree improbable; and I have myself seen the entire Arabic Koran in a parchment roll four inches wide and half an inch in diameter.* But these are exceptional cases. Printed

* Cicero hath recorded, that the whole Poeme of Homer called *Ilias*, was written in a peace of parchmin, which was able to be couched within a nutshell.—Holland's Pliny, i. 167.

Lalanne, *Curiosités Bibliographiques*, describes an edition of Rochefoucault's *Maxims*, published by Didot in 1829, as printed typographically in pages measuring 951 square millimetres, and containing 26 lines, with 44 letters to the line. A page one inch and twenty-one hundredths square, would be about equal to 951 square millimetres, or one square inch and forty-six hundredths, which would give 788 letters to the inch. This falls far short of what has been accomplished by the pen, and very greatly below the performances of the graver. Mr. Charles Toppan, an eminent engraver of New York, has engraved the Lord's Prayer with its title, the Ten Commandments with title and numbers, and his own initials, within a circle of less than 41-hundredths of an inch in diameter. The number of letters and figures on this plate is 1,550, and as its area is a trifle over an eighth of a square inch, the number of letters to the square inch would be 12,000. According to Lalanne, the *Iliad* contains 501,990

letter is, generally, much smaller than manuscript, and as manuscripts in the volume, or roll-form, were usually written on one side only, the bulk of a printed book is very much less than that of the same matter written by the hand. Hence we have, within the compass of a hand-volume, a dictionary or other book of reference, which, in an ancient library, would have filled a compartment; and the convenience of consulting it is increased in much the same proportion as its compression.

On the other hand, the facilities of production have multiplied the mass of books out of all proportion to the needs of literature. The cost of a book lies mainly in what printers call composition, that is, the arrangement of the type and pages to receive the impression. The amount of this item is the same for one copy as for a hundred thousand, and the typographical composition of a volume is scarcely more expensive than the execution of a single copy carefully written by hand. Every successive repetition of a manuscript costs as much as the first, and each, of course, as much as the type-setting for a whole edition of a printed book. Hence, an ancient author, who desired a wide and permanent circulation for his book, would study to confine it within such limits of bulk and price, that it could be repeated and multiplied without an extravagant tax on the purses of his public. But when the cost of books was so reduced by printing that the price of one ancient volume would buy a library, and a publisher could circulate a

letters, and of course, if engraved with equal minuteness, the whole Iliad would be contained within the compass of less than forty-two square inches, or, in other words, on a slip of paper one inch wide and twenty-one inches long, printed on both sides.

The title of Mr. Toppan's engraving can be made out, and, in a very strong light, much more of it read, without a magnifier, at least by the microscopic vision of a near-sighted person, but the height of the letters does not exceed the 150th part of an inch, and it cannot be said to be legible to the naked eye. Lalanne says, that Huet proved by experiment, that a thin parchment, measuring 27 by 21½ centimetres, which would give an area of 89 square inches, written on both sides, would contain the Iliad, and such a parchment, he observes, would readily go into a common-sized nut. Mr. Toppan might double the height and width of his letters and spaces, and still print the whole Iliad on *one* side of such a leaf.

Among the impudent forgeries of the notorious Simonides, there were manuscripts of wonderful beauty of execution, and written in characters almost as minute as those of Mr. Toppan's engraving.

hundred copies for a less sum than was formerly expended in producing one, the necessity of conciseness and compression was no longer felt. While, therefore, the immortal history of Thucydides, which, after three and twenty centuries, numbers hardly fewer readers than in the days of its greatest domestic glory, may be contained in two pocket volumes, Thuanus in the sixteenth century extends his narrative of the events of a few years, on a narrow theatre, to seven folios, the weight of which has already crushed the fabric of their author's fame. So numerous have books become, by modern facilities of production and reproduction, that men of varied tastes and multifarious reading can find time to *peruse* nothing. They skim over books, or as the French expressively say, they *parcourent les livres*, run through them, study them by tables of contents and indexes. "What, *read* books!" said one of the great lights of European physiological science to a not less eminent American scholar, "I never *read* a book in my life, except the Bible." He had time only to glance over the thousands of volumes which lay around him, to consult them occasionally, to excerpt the particular facts or illustrations which he needed to aid him in his own researches.

The elder Pliny, the most indefatigable laborer, the most voracious literary glutton of ancient times, in that remarkable dedication of his Natural History which I have just cited, says, that he had collected his encyclopedia out of two thousand volumes, written by one hundred approved authors, all of which he had diligently read.* Now, to judge from the Herculanensian manuscripts, these two thousand rolls would hardly have made two hundred fair octavos, and this was probably the entire library of the most learned of the Romans. In modern times, scholars by no means millionaires, as Thott in Denmark and Murr in Germany, have collected libraries of more than one hundred thousand volumes, each of which was equivalent to many of Pliny's, though we may well doubt whether the relative value was proportioned to the bulk.†

* "In 36 Books I have comprised 20,000 things, all worthy of regard and consideration, which I have collected out of 2000 volumes or thereabout, that I have diligently read, (and yet verie few of them there be, that men learned otherwise, and studious, dare meddle withall, for the deepe matter and hidden secrets therein contained,) and those written by 100 several elect and approved authors." Holland's Pliny. Dedication.

† The largest libraries which royal munificence founded in ancient times,

The art of stereotyping has greatly increased the ease of multiplication, and, in books much in demand, lessened the cost of production, and of course augmented the pecuniary profits of the publisher and the author, though without a corresponding reduction of price to the consumer, and with some detriment to the interests of literature. True it is, that a writer who designs to stereotype his work, has strong inducements to carry it to the highest pitch of completeness and finish, and if it belongs to any department of progressive knowledge, to bring it down to the latest moment in the history of his subject. But a book once stereotyped is substantially immutable. To every suggestion of improvement, to every exposure of error, every announcement of advancement by other inquirers in the same field, and even to new thoughts growing out of his own researches or riper reflections, the author must reply, with Pilate, "What I have written, I have written!" and the criticisms of friends and foes alike are but arguments after judgment. The possession of a set of stereotype plates enables a capitalist to defy competition. What printer will bring out a new edition of a book which he can afford at a dollar a volume, when he knows that his next-door neighbor, by means of his stereotype plates, can produce the same book in a form, which, in the uncritical judgment of the public, is little inferior, at half the price? Hence the art of stereotyping is one of the means which strengthen the tyrannical monopoly of literature to which I have before alluded; and though it may serve to diffuse knowledge more widely, it tends to retard its real progress.*

admitting that the number of volumes has not been exaggerated, were, doubtless, much inferior in quantity of matter to very many existing collections of printed books. The most extensive library before the invention of printing, of which we have credible accounts, was that of Tripoli in Syria, composed chiefly of Arabic books, and destroyed by the crusaders. Christian zealots have declaimed much against the barbarism of Omar, who is accused of the wanton destruction of the Alexandrian library, but how many of them have stigmatized the equally blind and culpable fanaticism which led the champions of the cross to burn the far larger collection at Tripoli, Cardinal Cisneros to destroy eighty thousand Arabic manuscripts, and even Fléclier to applaud Cardinal Ximenes for having made an *auto-da-fé* of five thousand Korans?

See Viardot, *Histoire des Arabes et des Mores d'Espagne*, vol. i. chap. 1, and vol. ii. chap. ii. Also, *Revue Orientale*, II., 495.

* In England and the United States, where every book for which a large

To strike the exact balance between the various influences of the art of printing, with its mechanical conditions, for good and for evil, is to earthly faculties impossible; but there can be no doubt that to the improvement of language, as a means of inter-communication between all the ranks of humanity, and therefore to the general elevation of humanity itself in the scale of being, it is the most important, the most beneficent of the inventions of man.

circulation is expected is stereotyped, the last edition differs from the first only in the title-page, which is renewed every year as regularly as the Almanac, and which heralds it as the 80th or the 8,000th edition according to the elasticity of the conscience of the publisher. In Germany, where stereotyping is little practised, the small editions usually printed rapidly succeed each other, and almost always with considerable changes. A German scholar, in his first edition, generally examines and refutes all that has been advanced by other writers of all times and countries upon the same subject, and those who buy the first edition are fortunate if they do not soon find that the author has made that worthless, by refuting himself in the second. There is never an end to the "Last Words" and "More Last Words" of a German Baxter, so long as he lives, and you are safe in quoting his authority only from Ostern to Michaelis, and from Michaelis to Ostern, because every new *Messe* brings with it either a recantation of his former views, or an advance upon them.

To speak seriously, the intellectual independence and moral courage of Germany, and those habits of persevering and continued research which forbid the scholars of that country to settle down upon the results of even their own investigations as final *stereotyped* conclusions, have been of infinite service in promoting the increase of knowledge and extending the sphere of human thought.

I would gladly have added some speculations on the influence of the Telegraph, and its inexorable "ten words," on language, but I have already perhaps devoted too much space to the consideration of the mechanical conditions which operate on human speech.

I must, however, be allowed to advert to one fact connected with the history of printing, which I have never seen explained, or, so far as I remember, even alluded to. It is, that in the seventeenth century (I have noticed no case in the sixteenth) successive editions of the same work, though differing widely in size and in general aspect of *letter*, are often printed, page for page, line for line, and word for word, in strict conformity with the prototype. Thus the first four editions of Sandys' *Travels in the East*, are *identical* in arrangement of the matter of the text. The two editions of Bernal Diaz, Madrid, 1683, though printed with very different types, otherwise exactly correspond to each other, except that one of them, presumably the later, contains an additional chapter on the portentous rains of reptiles—such as toads and the like—as well as other prodigies, which preceded the advent of the terrible Cortez. Was this conformity for convenience of reference? Or was it because experience had shown that the printers' journeymen could be trained to follow copy exactly, but could not be trusted to diverge at all from the printed page?

LECTURE XXII.

ORTHOEPICAL CHANGES IN ENGLISH.

Few subjects, belonging to the study of languages, are more difficult of investigation than the successive changes in their pronunciation. They are difficult, because the memory of a man or a generation, which almost alone preserves the record of such changes, is not long enough to admit of mutations greater than the transposition of an accent, the lengthening or shortening of a vowel, and the like, and our vocal notation is so incomplete and irregular, that we are always doubtful what sound is represented by any given combination of letters, unless in the case of known words which habit has rendered familiar to the ear. The obsolete words which occur in Chaucer and in Spenser are almost as uncertain in their sounds as if they belonged to an unknown tongue. We are, therefore, much in the dark as to the fact of a change in any given case, and it is seldom that we can say positively how any one word was pronounced a century ago. But in the few cases where the change is established, we are generally wholly unable to account for it. True, there are observed in all nations, all languages, tendencies to this or that revolution in pronunciation; but whence these tendencies, what are their laws, and what connection have they with changes in the signification of words, or their combination in periods? * In the

* The following remarks will illustrate what I mean by the connection between orthoepical and syntactical changes. In all languages, and especially in those where there is a marked tendency to the coalescence of successive articulations, as in Greek and in English, the pronunciation of consonants is much affected by the character of the sounds which precede or which follow them. In modern Greek, κ preceded by γ or by ν , takes the sound of our *g* hard, and $\delta\nu$ $\kappa\acute{\alpha}\pi\tau\omega$ is pronounced *ang-góptoh*; if π is preceded by ν , the ν assumes the sound of μ , and the π of the English *b*; consequently $\delta\nu$ $\pi\acute{\omicron}\nu\eta$ is pronounced *seem-bóh-noh*; τ following ν generally sounds *d*, and $\epsilon\nu\tau\alpha\upsilon\theta\alpha$ is articulated *en-dáf-thah*; π preceded by μ is sounded as the European *b*. The con-

case of a people like that of early England, or of the modern United States, made up of a hundred elements, exposed to a thousand external influences, we may see obvious causes of fluctuation in pronunciation; but in sedentary, homogeneous races, secured by position from foreign contact, it is often impossible

sonantal sounds *b* and *d* begin no Greek word, and in writing foreign names, and borrowed words in which those sounds occur, the Greeks use for *b* the combination $\mu\pi$; for *d*, the combination $\nu\tau$, so that *Byron* is spelled Μπαίρων ; *Bob* would be Μπομπ ; *dead*, $\nu\tau\epsilon\tau$ and *double*, $\nu\delta\mu\pi\iota\lambda$. It is conceivable that foreign influence or other causes may so modify the inflections and syntax, that those finals and initials, which never occur in succession in one stage of a language, may very frequently be brought together in another, and, by their reciprocal influence, much modify the general articulation of the speech.

Other interesting illustrations of the influence of articulations on each other will be found in the learned and curious History of the Greek alphabet by Professor Sophocles, second edition, Cambridge, 1854.

On page 277, and in a note on page 278, I mentioned instances where the grammatical use of words had been changed for orthoepical reasons. Another example, where the form of a word has been affected by the confusion of sounds, is in the phrase 'God *'ild* you,' which occurs in *As You Like It*, III. 8, and V. 4. In Sylvester's *Dubartas*, edition of 1611, IIII Book, IIII Day of the II week, we have the form 'God *dild* you.' Speaking of the lover, who discovers that his mistress owes her fine complexion to art, he says :

His cake is dough; God dild you, he will none;
He leaves his suit, and thus he saith anon, &c.

Gabriel Harvey, in a letter to Spenser, *Hazlewood*, II. 800, writes the phrase, 'God*dilge* yéé.' "Youre Latine Farewell is a goodly braue yonkerly péece of work, and Goddilge yéé, I am always maruellously beholding vnto you, for your bountifull titles." These three forms are evidently one word. Where a consonant is repeated, we generally articulate it but once, and therefore 'God *'ild*' and 'God *dild*' are hardly distinguishable by the ear. *Dilge*, again, is explained by the coalescence of the consonant *d* with the consonantal *y* of the following pronoun. The English *g* soft or *j* is generally considered as a compound consonant consisting of *d* and *sh*, but it may, with greater accuracy, be resolved into *d* and *y* consonant. If to the word *year* we prefix a *d*, we obtain *jeer*, and, *d+jeer* more truly represents this sound than *d+shear*, which is, very nearly, *d+s+year*. Hence, *God dilge ye* is, in sound, almost exactly equivalent to *God 'ild ye*. Although English articulation has long tended to insert the *y* consonant where it does not belong, rather than to suppress it where it does, yet the examples collected in *Nares* under *God 'ild*, as well as the concurrent use of *God yield* in similar combinations, show almost conclusively that the latter is the original, the former a corrupted form. The etymology *God shield* is quite improbable.

Halliwell, *Glossary*, gives *dilde*, to protect, as Anglo-Norman, but he cites

to suggest any explanation of orthoepic mutations. The people of Iceland have been less exposed to external influences than any other civilized and cultivated nation of Europe; yet, while their grammar and their vocabulary have remained essentially unaltered, their pronunciation appears to have undergone considerable changes. In Norway, a country also eminently exempt from the action of extraneous forces, and which, seven centuries since, used the same language as that of Iceland, there has been a great revolution in the pronunciation of those words which remain the same in the dialects of both; and this observation applies with no less force to Sweden, which is almost equally secluded from foreign influences. I speak now wholly with reference to the pronunciation of words which have remained in use, in forms substantially the same, not of lexical or grammatical changes.*

Many of our English words vary much in pronunciation from their cognates in the other Gothic dialects, and while, on the one hand, it is difficult to suppose that their present articulation can be as widely distinct from their own primitive utterance as it is from that of the same words in living Continental languages, it is, on the other, scarcely less so to imagine that the orthoepy of Anglo-Saxon differed from that of its Continental sisters as much as English pronunciation now does.†

no authority, and I find no evidence of the existence of such an Anglo-Norman word.

In Swedish orthography *j* corresponds to the English *y* consonant, and consequently *dj* in that language represents the English *j*. The confusion between sounds of this class is well illustrated by the following line from Browning:

“That hutch should rustle with sufficient straw.”

* Rask says that in ancient Icelandic, *f*, when not initial, had in all cases the sound of *v*, so that *nafn*, name, was pronounced *navn*. In modern Icelandic, the same word is pronounced *nabbn*; the verb *nefna*, (infinitive,) *nefna*, but the past tense, *nefndi*, as if written *nemndi*, and the participle *nefnt* like *nemnt*. In the same words as used in the modern Scandinavian, the Danish has an orthography which doubtless once represented the original pronunciation though now differently articulated. *Nafn* is in Danish written *Navn*, but the *av* is pronounced like the German *au* or nearly our *ou*, so that *Navn* and *noun* are much the same in sound. But in Sweden, the spelling and pronunciation correspond to the modern Icelandic articulation of the past tense and participle. *Nafn* is, in Swedish, *namn*; *nefna*, *nämna*.

† This discrepancy between the English (and probably Anglo-Saxon) and

The pronunciation of Anglo-Saxon is a matter of very great uncertainty. The opinions of grammarians on this subject, however positively expressed, are little better than conjectures, and the explanation of the changes which are known to have occurred, is very obscure. With respect to the fluctuations in modern English, the difficulty is hardly less, and it is increased by the notorious fact, that the differences of local pronunciation were, until within a very recent period, much greater than at present, so that when we have ascertained that a particular author pronounced in a particular way, we are not always authorized to infer that he followed any generally recognized standard.

The sources of information on the history of our pronunciation are, old treatises, expressly on English grammar and orthoepy, or on foreign languages in which comparisons are given between English and foreign sounds; casual remarks of authors not writing professedly on this subject; and, lastly and chiefly, poetical compositions. This last standard of comparison is not a sure guide, except in regard to accentuation, where, as the metre determines the quantity of each word, the only source of uncer-

the Teutonic pronunciation of words identical in etymology and spelling, appears to me to add some weight to the opinions I have expressed concerning the essentially composite character of the Anglo-Saxon language, and its distinctness from the comparatively homogeneous dialects of the Teutonic stock. All these latter agree in rejecting the two sounds of the *th* (*þ* and *ð*) which we have inherited from the Anglo-Saxon; they pronounce, approximately, *i* like our *e*, and *e* like our *a*; they have the softened *ö* and *ü* and the guttural and palatal *ch* and *g*, which are wanting in English; and they have not the English *ch* and *j*, or the Anglo-Saxon and English combination *hw* (*wh*). Our articulation, though very far from coinciding with that of the Scandinavian languages, nevertheless, on the whole, agrees with it more nearly than with that of the German. The vulgar New England pronunciation of the diphthong *ou* or *ow*, generally represented in writing it as provincial, by *ow*, prevails in several English local districts, as well as in some, at least, of the Frisian patois, and very possibly was once a normal sound in English, as it now is in Danish, where it is written *øv*, or *ev*, as in *Revle*, *revne*, *revse*, in which words it corresponds to the *ou* or *ow* in *cow*, *round*, *house*, in the Eastern pronunciation.

Almost every sound which is characteristic of English orthoepy is met with in one or other of the Scandinavian languages, and almost all their peculiarities, except those of intonation, are found in English, while between our articulation and that of the German dialects most nearly related to Anglo-Saxon, there are many irreconcilable discrepancies.

tainty is the doubt whether the author may not have displaced the accent by poetic license. In reference to rhymes, there is, first, the great difficulty of determining the sound of either of the words in the pair, whereby to test the pronunciation of the other, and then, the possibility that the rhymes, in a particular case, were of that imperfect class which necessity renders allowable. The word *heaven*, for instance, has few perfect rhymes in English, and of these few, most are, like *leaven*, *seven*, *eleven*, words not likely to be used in the same couplet with *heaven*.* The consequence is, that it is more frequently made to rhyme with *given*, *driven*, *riven*, *striven*, than with words exactly coincident with it in sound. A foreigner, knowing as little of the orthoepy of modern English as we do of that of the sixteenth century, would probably infer from a comparison of the examples where *heaven* is used in English poetry, that the combination *ea* was, in English orthography, equivalent to short *i*. Natives are of course liable to the same error in arguing former identity of sound from former use in rhyme.

In the Gothic and Romance languages, with the remarkable exception of the French, the accentual system is perhaps the most marked characteristic of their articulation. It is that which the foreigner first becomes aware of, because, in the main, the accented syllable is the one most distinctly heard in listening to a strange language. Our means of knowing the ancient accentuation of English are, so far as they go, capable of a good deal of certainty, and the law of change on this subject is evidently that of throwing the stress of voice more and more back towards the initial syllables, in accordance with the general rule in the cognate tongues, so that English accentuation is becoming more and more Anglicized, so to speak, while the vocabulary is becoming Romanized. There are certain exceptions to this rule in this country, but I postpone the consideration of them until I examine the tendencies of the language in America as contrasted with those it manifests in England.

* A friend furnishes me with the following quotation, which shows that these rhymes may be used even in serious composition :

“ As in the Measures of the Meal, the Leaven,
So in the heart, that preparation Sweet for Heaven,
The Hallow'd Rest of one day in the Seven.”

The pronunciation of primitive English is a subject of much interest in many points of view, but most obviously with reference to the character of early versification, and especially to the question whether old English poems, as those of Chaucer and Gower, are strictly metrical, or merely, like the verses of Langland in *Piers Ploughman*, rhythmical. It is also linguistically important, because we cannot compare our etymology and our inflections with those of languages nearly or remotely related, without knowing whether given sounds are expressed by the same signs in both. This uncertainty is a constant source of error in etymological research, and especially in the attempts to deduce native words from Oriental and other remote roots as written in European characters; for the imperfection of our alphabet often obliges travellers and scholars, in recording foreign words, to use one letter to express two sounds very different to a trained ear, but for which our notation furnishes but a single sign.

The collision between the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman-French orthographical and orthoepical systems, and the necessity of effecting a compromise between them, naturally drew the attention of English scholars, at a very early period, to the relation between sounds and the signs which represent them. The extract from the *Ormulum* given at the conclusion of Lecture XIX., shows that the writer had very carefully considered the subject; and many of the manuscript copies of Gower and Chaucer exhibit, in the uniformity and consistency of their orthography, like evidence that it had received thoughtful and thorough investigation. Several attempts were made in the sixteenth century to reform the spelling of English, which had been much corrupted by causes already described in previous lectures. Among these attempts, the system employed by Churchyarde in some of his poetical works, and ridiculed by Southey, under the name of "Churchyarde's Uglyography," is certainly not very inviting to the eye, but it is by no means without merit. The orthography proposed by Alexander Gill, or, as he writes it, Gil, in his *Logonomia Anglica*, first published in 1619, is still better adapted to the expression of the sounds of the language, and has the further advantage of suggesting the etymology of all native words more clearly than most other efforts in the way of phonographic writing. It should

be added, that the general conclusion to be drawn from the Logonomia is, that the change which has taken place in English pronunciation within two centuries and a half is, with one or two marked exceptions, less than we should infer from our other sources of information on the subject.

All the old English writers on orthography and pronunciation fail alike, in the want of clear descriptive analysis of sounds, and of illustration by comparison with the orthoepy of other languages more stable and uniform in articulation. For this reason, and probably also on account of real dialectic differences of pronunciation between them,* they appear often to stand in very direct contradiction to each other, and it is quite impossible to reconcile or explain their discrepancies. Under these circumstances no very precise and certain results can be arrived at, and I do not propound the opinions I am about to express, as generally supported by any thing more than a balance of probabilities.

Whether the vowel *a* had in Anglo-Saxon the same general sound as in English, or if not, when the change in its force took place, cannot now be positively ascertained. The most important direct authority I am aware of with respect to the early pronunciation of this vowel in modern English, is that of Palsgrave, who, in his chapter on the French vowel, says: "The soundyng of *a*, which is most generally used throughout the Frenche tonge, is such as we use with us where the best English is spoken, which is lyke as the Italians sound *a*." There is no doubt that the Italian pronunciation of *a* was the same in the sixteenth century as at present, and hence it would appear that in Palsgrave's time, the normal English sound of *a* was as it is heard in *father*, or what orthoepists

* Gil, who was a native of Lincolnshire, but resided in London as headmaster of St. Paul's school, speaks of six dialects: the common, the Northern, the Southern, the Eastern, the Western, and the poetic, but the exemplifications he gives point as often to differences in grammar and vocabulary, as in orthoepy. As instances of fluctuations in pronunciation, evidently with reference to what he calls the *common* dialect, he says that *you* was pronounced both *yow* and *yu*; *toil*, *broil*, *soil*, often *tüil*, *brüil*, *süil*; *shall* either *shal* or *shaul*; and *buildeth*, indifferently, *büldeth*, *biledeth*, *beeldeth*, and *bildeth*. This latter confusion must have arisen, not in popular speech, but from the embarrassment occasioned by a foreign orthography; for though *build* is English, the vowel combination *ui* is not, except in a very few native words beginning with *g* and *q*, in which latter case, *u* takes the place of *u*.

generally call the Italian *a*. Palsgrave gives no English example, but though his statement cannot be accepted in its full extent, there seems to be no good reason for doubting that this sound was much more common in older than in more recent English. French words, introduced colloquially, would bring with them the French pronunciation, and in words derived from that source, some time would elapse before the vowels would take the sounds belonging to them in English orthography. But the orthography of Churchyarde shows that in words of Saxon etymology, as well as in many of French origin, the *a* was in his time pronounced as at present. He expresses this sound by *æ*, and writes *mæk*, *tæm*, *næm*, *mæil*, for *make*, *tame*, *name*, *made*, and *flæm*, *dæm*, *fæm*, for *flame*, *dame*, *fame*. It is a familiarly known fact that *a* had, until within a comparatively short period, the broad sound, as in *wall*, in many cases where we now pronounce it either as in *father* or as in *hat*. Ben Jonson lays down the rule that this vowel before *l*, followed by another consonant, has always the broad sound, and he gives as examples the words *salt*, *malt*, *balm*, *calm*, in all of which he says the *a* sounds as in *all*, *call*, *small*, *gall*, *fall*, and *tall*. *Barom* is still the popular pronunciation of *balm* in many English and American localities, but *calm* is seldom or never heard with the broad *a*. Gil says that *balm*, *fault*, and *half* were popularly pronounced *barom*, *farot*, and *harof*, (or in his phonographic system, *bâm*, *fât*, and *hâf*;) but that many scholars articulated the *l*, and he writes them *bâlm*, *fâult*, and *hâlf*.* The French nasal *a* would very naturally be changed in English into the broad *a*, to which it more nearly approximates than to the shorter sounds of this vowel, with which English writers on French pronunciation usually compare it, and accordingly Gil informs us that in *advance*, *chance*, *France*, *demand*, the *a* was sounded broad, as in *tall*; and in *dance*, short or broad, indifferently.†

* Mulcaster, p. 128, says *calm*, *balm*, *calf*, *calves*, *salves*, were pronounced in his time, *caum*, *barom*, *caulf*, *cauoes*, *saoues*.

† French-English pronouncing dictionaries generally give the *a* in the English *sand* as a near approximation to the French *a* nasalized in *sans*; the *o* in the English *bond* as nearly equivalent of *o* nasal in the French *bon*. The French nasal *a* is much better represented by Gil's *â*, and the nasal *o* is a more close sound than our short *o*, and in fact approximates nearer to the English long *o*.

In all the European languages, the pronunciation of *e* is a subject of much difficulty, for, by almost imperceptible gradations, it runs through the whole scale between *ā* in *fate*, and *ee* in *see*, the latter sound being the equivalent of the Continental long *i*. Gil, in describing the vowels, says *e* is short in *net*, and long in *neat*. The short sound he represents by simple *e*, the long by *ē*, and this vowel he distinguishes from the sound of *ee* in *seen*, *keen*, whether in words ordinarily spelled with one *e*, as in *he*, with two, as in the words just quoted, or with *ie*, as in *believe*, *shield*. He also distinguishes long *e* (*ē*) from long *a*, which he represents by *ā*. His standards for this latter sound are *tale* and *māle*, and he employs the character *ä* before the liquid *r*, as well as before other consonants, as, for example, in *care*, *careful*, which he uniformly spells *cār*, *cārful*. The long *e* (*ē*) of Gil, then, was neither our *a* in *fate*, nor our *e* in *be*, and he discriminates between them all, not only in the examples I have cited, but in express and unequivocal terms.*

* *Ισχυρότην* autem illam magnopere affectant *πυγοστόλοι* nostræ *Μορσæ*, quæ quidem ita omnia attenuant, ut *a* et *o* non aliter perhorrescere videantur quam Appius Claudius *z*, sic etiam nostræ non emunt *laun* et *kämbrük*, sindonis species, sed *læn* et *kämbrük*; nec edunt *käpn*, caponem, sed *këpn*, et fere *kïpn*; nec unquam liguriunt *buchorz mêt*, butchers meate, *i*, carnem a laniis, sed *bi-cherez mêt*. Et quum sint omnes *gintlimin*, non *gentiwimen*, *i*, matronæ nobiles, ancillas non vocant *maidz* sed *mëde*. Logonomia Anglica, Second Edition, 1621, p. 17.

The only instances in which Gil seems to confound the sound of *ea* and of long *e* with long *i* (*ee*) are in the words *appear*, which he spells *appier*, *near* spelt *nier*, and *dear* spelt *dier*, upon which last word he remarks, "I cum *e* in diphthongum coalescit in *dier* dama vel carus." Logonomia, p. 15.

But the confusion is apparent only, not real. *Dear* and *near* certainly, and *appear* probably, were pronounced with the sound of long *ee*, and did not rhyme with *fear*, in the latter half of the sixteenth century, and doubtless in Gil's time. At that period, almost the only orthoepical sign commonly employed in English was an acute accent, to indicate the long sound of *e* or *ee*, as may be seen in the old editions of Holinshed, and very many other authors of that time. *Dear* was then usually spelt *dëere*; *near*, *nëere*; whereas *fear* and most other words now written with that ending were spelt as at present, and without the accent. Numerous exemplifications of this will be found in Holinshed, as, for instance, on pp. 868, 869, 870, 871, vol. III., reprint of 1806.

In the rules for the pronunciation of English at the end of Sherwood's English and French Dictionary, London, 1650, the sound of *é* French is ascribed to the diphthongs *ea* and *ei*.

Les diphthongues *ea* and *ei* se prononcent *é*, comme *teach*, *decree*.

It is not easy to reconcile all Gil's examples with each other, or to determine what precise sound he indicates by the vowel *ë*, for he employs it alike in words now pronounced with the sounds of *ē* in *be*, *ē* in *let*, and *ā* in *fate*, and in others again where the present pronunciation is intermediate. In describing the vowels, he cites *neat* as an example of the sound of *ë*, but in his table, the standard for it is *beast*, and the combination *ea* is almost always represented in his orthography by *ë*. Thus he writes *dead*, *death*, *head*, *lead*, (noun,) *pleasure*, *sweat*, (present tense,) *dëd*, *dëth*, *hëd*, *lëd*, *plëzur*, *swët*. In all these the vowel is now short *e*. *Cleave*, *grease*, *leaf*, *leaves*, *sea*, *mean*, *meat*, *weak*, *wheat*, in all which the vowel, as now pronounced, is the long *e*, he spells *clëv*, *grës*, *lëf*, *lëvz*, *së*, *mën*, *mët*, *wëk*, *whët*. *Break* and *great*, at present sounded as if written *brake* and *grate*, are *brëk* and *grët* in Gil's system, and *forbear*, *earth*, *learned*, *swear*, are *forbër*, *ërth*, *lërnëd*, *swër*. *Heaven* he spells sometimes *hevn*, and sometimes *hëvn*. He also uses the same character to express the vowel sound of *e* in *Grecian*, *these*, *were*, *there*, *perch*, *theirs*, and *they*, writing *Grëcian*, *ðëz*, *wër*, *ðër*, *përch*, *ðërz*, and *ðëi*, though in one instance he spells this last word "thëi or thäi."

Palsgrave, speaking of the French *e*, says: "Sometyne they sounde him lyke as we do in our tonge in *beere*, *beest*, *peere*, *beene*, but *e* in Frenche hath never such a sounde as we use to gyve him in a *beere* [bier] to lay a dead corpse on; *peere*, a mate or fellow; a *bee*, such as maketh honny, and as we sound our pronouns *we*, *me*, *he*, *she*." In Palsgrave's time, then, *beast* and *bean* were pronounced, nearly at least, *bāste* and *bāne*, as they still are in Ireland, and provincially in England. Taking this statement in connection with the fact that Gil distinguishes *ë* from both *ā* and *ï*, and comparing the words which he spells with *ë*, I think we are authorized to conclude that he intended to indicate by it a sound corresponding to that of *ê* in the French *fête*, which, the Anglo-French dictionaries to the contrary notwithstanding, is

Ê, diphongue, on prononce *î*, comme *need*, *seed*, *breed*, *speed*, *creed*.

Hence it is evident that the vowel sound in *teach*, *receive*, was not that of *ee* in *need*, but was the Continental *e*. See Coryat's Travels, p. 852.

In the time of Swift, the normal or alphabetical pronunciation of *e* in Latin was our modern long *a*. Hence he represents *amicus venerabilis* by *am I say vain a rabble is*.

not the sound of *a* in *fate*, but much more nearly that of *e* in *there*, as usually pronounced in New England. The *e* in *there*, in the New England pronunciation, is the long vowel corresponding to the short *a* in *man*, so that *hair* and *hat*, or, better still, *pare* and *parry*, *care* and *carry*, respectively exemplify the long and short sounds of the vowel.*

Most English orthoepists, I believe, now maintain that the sound of *e* in *there*, and of *ai* in *pair*, is identical with that of *a* in *fate*, and say that *pair*, a couple, is precisely equivalent in pronunciation to *payer*, he that *pays*. It is certain that, at least until very recently, educated persons in this country did make a distinction between these sounds, precisely analogous in kind to that between the French *é* and *è*; that is, *a* in *pate* and *payer* bore the same relation to *a* in *pair*, or *e* in *there*, that *é* in *période* bears to *è* in *père*. I cannot help thinking that the English themselves do at this moment, in practice, generally discriminate between these vowel sounds, though theoretically they deny the distinction. But, nevertheless, the authority of pronouncing dictionaries is likely to prevail, and thus one of the radical sounds of the language, a sound which is a recognized orthoepical element in almost every known speech, will, not improbably, be banished from the English tongue. The ignorance of grammarians has done much to corrupt our language, the dulness of orthoepists much to confuse our pronunciation. The inability of Walker and his school to distinguish between the sounds we are considering,

* A passage in Harvey's Letter to Spenser, Haslewood II. 281, though written for another purpose, shows that *fair* and other words of like sound had two pronunciations, one of which was probably with the vowel sound of *a* in *fate*, the other that referred to in the text: "Marry, I confesse, some wordes we have indeede, as, for example, *fayer*, either for beautiful, or for a *Mart*; *ayer* both *proaëre*, and *prohærede* * * which are commonly, and maye indifferently be used eyther wayes. For you shal as well, and as ordinarily heare *fayer* as *faire*, and *Aier* as *Aire*." Harvey is here particularly referring to the pronouncing of these words as monosyllables or as dissyllables. Now, by pronouncing them with the *a* in *fate*, we inevitably make them dissyllables, because our long *a* is diphthongal, but if we give the vowel the sound of *è* in the French *fête*, they become monosyllabic, because the vowel is simple. *Squire* is popularly pronounced *square* in New England. Probably the pronunciation was the same in England in Ben Jonson's time, for *square* (quadrate) is spelled *squire* by the printers, in the *Silent Woman*, Act V., Scene I., ed. of 1640.

is a fruit of the same obtuseness of ear which led them to confound the *y* final of such words as *society*, with *e* in *be*, and thus to obliterate the distinction between the long and short sounds, which characterizes especially the orthoepy of all the Gothic languages. For a reason which will be given in another lecture, the vowel sounds and shades of sound are particularly numerous in those languages, and the Gothic ear was keenly sensible to very subtle distinctions; but we are diverging from their and our own primitive articulation, in all points but accentuation, and unless a reaction takes place, we shall soon be reduced to as meagre a list of vowel sounds as belong to the Spanish or Italian.*

The orthoepy of the vowel *i* is attended with less difficulty than that of *e*, and there is reason to think that the long and short sounds it serves to indicate have remained essentially unchanged for centuries. The analogy of the other Gothic languages would lead us to expect to find the short sound wherever the vowel is followed by two consonants in the same syllable; but, contrary to this rule, *i* before *ld* or *nd* is, in English, almost uniformly long. Churchyarde indeed gives to *i* in *child* the short sound as in *did*, *will*, but this is probably either a misprint or a provincialism, for in the Ormulum, *child*, as well as *bind*, *mind*, *wild*, is spelt with a single liquid, which, in the orthography of that work, indicates that the preceding vowel is long. In *chilldre*, the plural of *child*, on the contrary, the *i* is made short by reduplicating the *l*, whence it appears that in Ormin's time, or at least dialect, the singular and plural of this noun were distinguished much as at present. We pronounce the noun *wind*, in prose, with the short *i*, in poetry often with the long vowel, but the verb *to wind* is always pro-

* By admitting that the words spelled by Gil with *ē* were pronounced with the sound of French *é*, Italian *é*, German and Swedish *e*, and properly distinguishing this vowel from our diphthongal long *a*, we bring early English orthoepy into harmony with that of the cognate languages, so far as respects a very large class of words common to them all. We are, indeed, still left with the puzzling question, how so many of them have lately acquired the sound of our modern long *e*, the Continental *i*. Of this I confess myself unable to offer a solution, but no philologist will deny that at *some* period of the Anglican tongue, the vowel in most of these words had the sound of the Continental *e*, and it is as easy to explain the change upon the supposition that it took place within two centuries, as upon the theory that it was made in the Anglo-Saxon period.

nounced with *i* long. Neither of these words occurs in the Ormulum, but there are derivatives from both, and these are spelt with two *nn*, so that in the thirteenth century both probably took the short vowel.*

It is an observation more familiar to foreign phonologists than to ourselves, that the English long vowels are nearly all diphthongs, that is, the proper long sound in combination with that of *e*, (the Continental *i*), or in some cases *û*. Thus our *a* in *day*, and even in *fate*, is really *a*, (the Continental *e*), + *e*. Churchyard had detected this, and it is a proof of the acuteness of his ear that he should have made so nice an observation, though he is not always accurate in his resolution of the diphthong. He represents long *a* by *æ*, and writes *make*, *mæk*; *take*, *tæk*, and the like. The diphthongal character of our long vowels, though obvious enough in the case of *a* and *e*, is less so in *o* and *u*, where the subordinate element is the obscure *û*, but it is very palpable and conspicuous in the long *i*, which is a true diphthong, consisting of the *a* in *father* followed by *e*, and in many Continental languages the same or a very similar sound is represented by the combination *ai*. Churchyard, mistaking the true character of *i* long, expresses it by *ye*, making *y* the principal, *e* the auxiliary vowel, and he writes *whine*, *strike*, respectively *whyene*, *stryeke*. John Knox, who was a contemporary of Churchyard, founded his orthography on a similar principle, but he employs the vowel *i* as the subordinate element, or sign of prosodical length, where Churchyard uses *e*. Thus he spells *make*, *maik*; *beer*, *beir*; *beast*, *beist*; *priest*, *preist*; *like*, *lyik*; *wife*, *wyif*; *restore*, *re stoir*; and *book*, *buik*.†

Spenser, in his *Mother Hubberds Tale*, has these lines :

Whilome (said she) before the world was civil,
The Foxe and th' Ape, disliking of their evill

* Gil, p. 10, spells the noun, *wind*, *wjnd*, which indicates the long sound of the vowel.

† Other Scottish and English writers had adopted a similar orthography at an earlier period, but Knox is more consistent and uniform in his adherence to it than is King James, Bellenden, or any other writer of that nation whose works I have examined.

Capgrave, pp. 340, 341, makes *proest* a dissyllable. Teuthonista has *Beick* for *book*.

And hard estate, determined to seeke
Their fortunes farre abroad, *lyeke* with his *lyeke*.

Here the *e* serves, not to lengthen the *y*, but as a diæresis, to resolve the diphthong into its constituent parts, and make *like* an iambus. Whenever, in pronouncing such words as *like*, we dwell much on the vowel, it becomes very distinctly diphthongal, and we make the monosyllable a dissyllable, as Spenser, to help at once rhyme and metre, has done. The difference is barely this. In our ordinary pronunciation of the combination *ae*, represented by long *i* in English, we habitually accent the first vowel element, the *a*, and this articulation, *a* being sounded as in *father*, would be expressed by writing *like*, *lâ-êke*; but if we transfer the accent to the *e*, the final element, we make it a dissyllable, *la-êke*.

French words, transferred to English, naturally retain for some time the Continental pronunciation of this vowel, but in most combinations it tends to conform itself to English orthoepy. *Oblige*, for example, in its complimentary sense, is a word recently introduced from France, for this is a meaning unknown to Shakespeare, and, as a word of ceremonial phraseology, it was at first pronounced *obleege*, but it is now almost uniformly articulated with the English sound of *i* long.

The vowel *o* is almost as vague and uncertain as *e*. With respect to the long *o*, Gil differs very little from modern orthoepists, but Churchyarde is not so easily reconciled with our present pronunciation. In accordance with his general system of vowel notation, he represents long *o* by the combination *oe*, and writes in that way most of the syllables now sounded with long *o*, but he applies the same notation to many now pronounced very differently. Thus, school he writes *skoel*, poor *poer*, shoot *shoett*, lose *loes*, good *goed*, blood *bloed*, blush *bloeshe*, and push *poeshe*. On the other hand, Puttenham, in his *Arte of English Poesie*, denies that *poor*, or even *door*, is pronounced with long *o*. "If one should rime," says he, "to this word, (*restore*,) he may not match him with *doore* or *poore*, for neither of both are of like terminant either by good orthography or in natural sound."* Ben Jonson ascribes to this letter two sounds. "In the *long* time," observes

* Gil writes *doors*, *dürz*, and of course ascribes to the *oo* in *door* the same sound as we now do in *poor*.

he, "o soundeth sharp and high," and he assimilates it to the Greek Ω . This is evidently our long *o* in *note*, and our author cites that word, together with *chósen*, *hósen*, *hóly*, *ópen*, *óver*, *thróte*, and *fóly* as exemplifying it. Jonson, therefore, must have pronounced *folly* as if written, *folý*, and in several of his poems he rhymes it with *hóly*, which, indeed, would now be allowable, not as a perfect rhyme, but by poetic license. "In the *short* time," continues he, "it soundeth more flat and akin to *u*," and of this he cites as instances the words *cosen*, *dozen*, *mother*, *brother*, *love*, and *prove*. Had he stopped here we should have inferred that *prove* was in Jonson's time pronounced *príve*, because all his other examples have now the vowel sound of short *u*. But inasmuch as in a Latin note to this passage, he says that this sound was generally expressed in English by double *oo*, and that it corresponded exactly to the French *ou*, we should conclude that the *u* to which he compares the short *o* was not the short *u* in *but*, but perhaps the *u* in *full*, (which is not related to *u* in *but*, but is a short vowel corresponding to long *oo* in *pool*,) and, consequently, that these words were pronounced respectively *coosin*, *doozen*, *mooother*, *broother*, *loove*. In fact, Laneham, Spenser in his letter to Harvey, and many other authors of the latter part of the sixteenth century, write these very words with *oo*, and the frequency of such rhymes as *love prove*, *love move*, would seem to lend some support to the theory that they were all pronounced as they would be according to our present orthoepy, if spelt with *oo*. But the question is by no means so easily disposed of.* Gil says that *u* is "tenuis aut crassa: tenuis est in verbo *tu vz*, use, u tor; crassa brevis est *u*, ut in pronomine *us*, *nos*"; and in his table of sounds, he employs the participle *spun*, as the standard exemplification of this sound; *spoon*, (in his orthography, *spün*,) for long *u*. The short sound he indicates by the common form of the vowel, and he spells *dozen*, *brother*, *mother*, *love*, respectively, *dúzn*, *brúder*, *múder*, *luv*, thus directly contradicting Jonson's rule, and assigning to these words a pronunciation precisely like that of our day. On the other hand, he uses the same vowel in many instances, where we now pronounce words with the normal sound of *oo*, as for example *gud*

* See observations in *N. American Review*, 1864.

good, *wud* wood, *wouman* (sing.) woman, *ful* full, (and all the terminations in *-ful* short also,) *push* push, *bush* bush, *wul* wool. Most of these words occur in numerous instances in the Logonomia, and though it seems improbable that they were ever pronounced with the sound of *û* in *us*, yet they are too carefully distinguished from words with the long sound of *oo* to be supposed to be typographical errors. In the many other words where this very common English sound is met with, Gil's notation is in accordance with modern usage. Gil and Jonson were contemporaries, and both residents of London. To reconcile them seems impossible, and we must therefore conclude that the pronunciation of the words concerning which they disagree was very unsettled.*

There has been some question whether the present pronunciation of *u* in *nature*, and other like combinations, is of recent origin, but the authority of Gil shows that it was employed in his time, for he distinguishes the *u* in words of that termination both from *u* in *us*, and from the simple long *û* or *oo* in *ooze*, which he expresses by the character *û*. He spells *nature* and *literature*, *natur*, *literatur*, employing the same sign as in *use*, which he writes *vz*, and those words must of course have been articulated much as they are at this day.

Whether there were any true diphthongs in Old-English, and if not, when they were introduced, is a question which cannot now be answered. In the Ormulum, we have the vowel combinations: *æ*, represented by a single character, and probably pronounced as a single vowel; *eo*, usually represented in modern orthography

* Mulcaster's observations upon the vowel *o* do not aid much in removing the difficulty. He remarks, p. 115, "O soundeth as much upon the *u* which is his cosin, as upon the *ó* which is his naturall; as in *cósen*, *dózen*, *móther*, which *o* is still naturallie short, and *hózen*, *frózen*, *móther*, which *o* is naturallie long." On p. 152, he explains the apparent discrepancy in his notation of *mother*, by writing *mother*, the female parent, *móther*, *mother*; a slatternly girl, *móther*. On p. 116 he writes *tò*, preposition, *twò*, *dò*, *undò*, *remòve*, with the same sign as *cózen*, *dózen*, *móther*, whence we should infer that the vowel sounds were alike, but he also writes *glòve*, *dòve*, and *shòve*, in the same way. To the word *love* he assigns two sounds, *lòve* and *lòve*, one being the verb, the other the noun, though it does not appear which part of speech has the grave, and which the acute, accent. The rhyming poetry of that period (1575) might determine this question.

and perhaps orthoepy by *ee*; and the vowel and semi-vowel combinations *aw*, *ew*, and *ow*. Besides these, *w* is used before all the vowels, and *i* long may have had the same diphthongal character as at present. After *e* and *o* always, and generally after *a*, the *w* is doubled, which implies that the vowel preceding was short; and the probability is that those combinations were articulated as true diphthongs. The orthography of some old manuscripts seems to indicate a very full and distinct pronunciation of both elements in these last combinations, as, for instance, in the metrical romance of Sir Amadace, published by the Camden Society, where we find *howundes*, *rowunde*, *porunde*, *commaround*, for *hounds*, *round*, *pound*, *command*, (*command*;) and in the Avowynge of King Arthur in the same volume, *rowuntable*, *worundes*, *rowunsone*, *encowunturinge*, for *round table*, *wounds*, *ransom*, (*raunson*.) and *encowuntering*. Shakespeare, according to the Quarto Reprint of the edition of 1623, generally treated *houres* as a dissyllable:

“So many *Houres*, must I tend my Flock;
 So many *Houres*, must I take my Rest,” &c.
 “If this right hand would buy two *houres* life,” &c.;

but instances of its use as a monosyllable are not unfrequent in the same Reprint.*

Consonants, though by no means unchangeable, are more stable than vowels, the law of their mutations is more constant, or at least better ascertained, and they frequently remain fixed in the written, after they have been lost or changed in sound, in the spoken dialect.† Hence, in researches into the history of lan-

* See Robert of Gloucester, p. 275.

† French orthography presents a wider discrepancy between the written and spoken dialects than does that of any other European language. Landor, in his Conversation with Delille, asks, “What man of what nation, ancient or modern, could imagine the existence of a people on the same globe with himself, who employ the letters *eaux* to express the sound of *o*?” In fairness he should have allowed Delille, by way of set-off, to run through the list of sounds, simple and compound, which we express by the formidable combination, *ough*. The etymology of a large proportion of the French vocabulary is traceable only by its written forms, for, as articulated, the words often lose all resemblance to their originals, and it is the suppression or change of consonants that disguises them. Whether the orthography ever represented the pronunciation is very doubtful, and Génin has shown that some centuries since the discrepancy was even greater than it is now.

guage they are of cardinal importance, and consequently have almost exclusively engaged the attention of etymologists, while, on the other hand, their supposed permanence, immutability, and distinctness of character have led them to be much neglected by orthoepists, as elements too constant, obvious, and well understood, to require much investigation or explanation. But in point of fact, consonants are very far from being so well discriminated, or so permanent constituents of spoken language as is generally assumed. It is true that their differences are more easily appreciated by the ear, though less easily imitated by the tongue, than those between vowels, but he who observes the indistinct articulation of the consonants in Danish, the confounding of the hard and soft sounds of *g* in some dialects of Arabic, and of *l* and *r* in the Polynesian islands, in the island of Sardinia and in some parts of Switzerland, the separation in Italian and Spanish of consonants which coalesce in English,* the almost inaudible difference between the two in some Oriental languages, not to speak of numerous other peculiarities of the like sort, will be convinced that our own consonants may deserve and repay a more careful study than English orthoepists have yet given them. The lower classes of the French Canadians habitually confound the mutes *k* and *t*, in certain combinations, and say *mékier*, *moikié* for *métier*, *moitié*, and Molière, in his *Médecin Malgré Lui*, makes Jacqueline say *amiquié* for *amitié*, *quarquié* for *quartier*, etc.

* I think what I have called the *coalescence* of consonants is more marked in English than in any of the sister tongues, except perhaps in Danish. It is particularly obvious in our articulation of *l*, *n*, and *r*, followed by another consonant, and of *l* and *r* preceded by another consonant, in the same syllable, our pronunciation of which combinations is of a nasalized and at the same time of a di-phthongal character, while in Spanish and Italian these elements are as distinctly and independently articulated as any others. By way of compensation for this confusion of sound, we exaggerate the diæresis of some consonants incapable of thus sliding into each other, and interpose an obscure vowel between them. *Chasm* and other words of similar ending are popularly pronounced as disyllables, and in *blossom*, *besom*, *bosom*, and *chrisom* we have introduced a *written* vowel between the *s* and *m* of the radicals. The consonant *m* does not readily unite even with a preceding liquid, and hence the vulgar pronunciation *ellum*, *hellum*, for *elm*, *helm*, and the word *alarum* for *alarm*. It is perhaps in this reluctance of *m* to coalesce with a preceding liquid, that we find the explanation of the suppression of the *l* in *balm*, *calm*, and other words of similar ending.

The modern Italian *fatto*, (in the 14th century *facto*,) from the Latin *factum*, is a similar case of change of consonant; and in the collection of comedies called *Le Ciane* in the Florentine dialect, are many curious illustrations of the confusion between *t*, *c*, and *h*. The double forms *nuncius* and *nuntius*, and the like, show that the Romans did the same thing, if, as has been supposed, their *c* had always the force of *k*.* The interchange of these mutes also explains the double forms in English of *bat* and *back*, *brittle* and *brickle*, *vind* (whence *tinder*) and *kindle*.

An extraordinary instance of this particular confusion occurs in the remarks on pronunciation prefixed to the edition of Webster's large dictionary printed in 1828. In that essay, the lexicographer, whose most conspicuous defects were certainly not those of the ear, after having devoted a lifetime to the study of English orthoepy and etymology, informs the student that, "The letters *cl* answering to *kl* are pronounced as if written *tl*; *clear*, *clean*, are pronounced *tlear*, *tlean*. *Gl* is pronounced *dl*; *glory* is pronounced *dlory*."

The pronunciation of the English consonants in general partakes of the stability which marks their articulation in other languages, and there is good reason to believe that it is, in this respect, more accordant with the Anglo-Saxon, than are the cognate Scandinavian dialects with their Old-Northern original.

The *b* of the English alphabet is very pure and distinct in its pronunciation, showing no tendency to the more explosive articulation of some German dialects, or the more fricative of the Spanish, and I am aware of no reason for supposing that it has undergone any change as an element of English orthoepy.†

* What was the pronunciation of the Latin *c* is a question of the same order as: what is the pronunciation of the Italian *c*? See Cortecelli and Florio.

† The pedant *Holofernes* in *Love's Labor's Lost* criticizes the pronunciation of the coxcomb *Don Adriano de Armado*, and calls him a 'racker of orthography,' because he 'speaks *dout* fine, when he should say *doubt*; *det* when he should pronounce *debt*, *d, e, b, t*, not *d, e, t*.' The ingenious commentator of the excellent edition of *Shakespeare* lately published in Boston, hence argues that consonants now silent were, in *Shakespeare's* time, heard on the lips of purists, and that the change from the ancient pronunciation, (in which he supposes these consonants to have been articulated,) to the modern in which they are silent, took place between 1575 and 1625, and he cites *Butler's Grammar* of 1633, to show that at that period *b* was not pronounced in either of the words in question, and was retained in spelling merely to show their derivation from

The Anglo-Saxon *c* had very probably the double force of the Italian *c*, representing, in different combinations, *ch* and *k*, which latter consonant did not properly belong to the native alphabet, though not absolutely unknown to it. When it preceded *n* at the beginning of words, as in *oneow*, knee, *cnáwan*, to know, and *onotta*, knot, there can be little doubt that it was pronounced as *k* now is in similar combinations in modern German; but it became silent soon after the Norman Conquest, and *c* has since undergone little if any change of sound.

the Latin. The only authority for the position that they ever were pronounced in English is the criticism of Holofernes which I have just cited. Holofernes is at once a pedant and an ignoramus. His English and his Latin are equally barbarous, and the testimony of such a person would be insufficient to establish the position, even if uncontradicted. But the evidence to the contrary appears to me strong, and I am persuaded that there never was a period when the *b* was commonly sounded in either word, though individuals may have been guilty of such an affectation. *Debt* and *doubt* are descended from the Latin words *debeo* and *dubito*, but we derived them from the French, not the Latin, at a period when French was as familiarly used in England as English itself, and of course, as in other cases, we took them with the French pronunciation. The arguments of Génin in his *Récréations Philologiques*, and the express words of Palsgrave, p. 26, show satisfactorily that in the French *debt* and *doubt*, the old forms of *dette* and *doute*, the *b* was not sounded even when it was written. Robert of Gloucester, in the thirteenth century, p. 73, writes *dette*, and p. 89, *doute*. *Det*, *dette*, *dout*, *doute*, and *dought*, were the regular spelling until after the Reformation, and numerous examples of these forms occur in Lord Berners's Froissart, and in other writers of that and earlier centuries. With the diffusion of classical literature, as I have elsewhere remarked, came in an orthography more consonant to etymology, but it was long before the orthoepy of the reformed words underwent a corresponding change. The combination *bt* is almost unpronounceable. It does not occur in Anglo-Saxon, and in that language even the *pt* of the cognate dialects passes into *ft*. The combination *ct* presents no such difficulty, but we learn from Campion, (Haslewood's Collection II. 187,) that in 1602, *perfect*, though the *c* had now been introduced into the written language, was still pronounced *per-fet*. Spenser rhymes *set her* and *debtor*; *shout* and *dout*. Gil quotes the verses containing this last rhyme B. IV. C. III. 41, without remark, spelling *doubt*, *dout*; and on page 88, where there is no question of rhyme, he spells *doubtful* without the *b*. B. Jonson, Ep. 71 to K. James, rhymes *doubt* and *devout*; 73, *letter* and *debtor*; 119, *bet* and *debt*. In these cases, as in hundreds of others, the pronunciation of the *b* would have destroyed the rhyme. It is then certain, that, before the Reformation, the *b* in these words was not even written; the testimony of Gil shows that it was not pronounced in 1621; and that of Butler, cited by Mr. White, is positive that it was silent in 1633. We have also the evidence of rhyme that it was not pronounced in the interval, and Holofernes is not a credible witness to the contrary.

The confusion into which Anglo-Saxon orthography was thrown by the introduction of the Latin and French elements, bringing with them an alphabet differing more or less from the Saxon in the form and power of its letters, soon led to the abandonment of the characters not common to the orthography of both the native and the foreign tongues. The Saxon þ and ð, representing the two sounds of *th*, which were wanting in Latin and French, were dropped, and though there was much irregularity in the use of substitutes for them, *d* was very frequently employed for the ð, and *f* a ð er, *father*, was accordingly written *fader*. The employment of *d* for two purposes occasioned confusion in orthoepy, and this consonant was not only sounded as *th* in native words originally spelled with ð, but it took the *th* sound in some others, and sometimes even in Latin pronunciation. Palsgrave warns the pupil against pronouncing the *d* in the French words *adoption*, *adulcer*, "like *th*, as we of our tonge do in these wordes of Latine, *ath adjuvandum* for *ad adjuvandum*, corruptly." This explains Fluellen's pronunciation of *adversary* as *athversary* in Henry V., *athvertised* cited in Halliwell, and other like cases. The more general substitution of *th* for ð has removed this source of embarrassment, and the consonant *d* seems to have undergone no other change in articulation.

F had formerly the sound of *v* more frequently than at present. In some provincial dialects it took and still retains the force of *v*, even when initial. Ben Jonson cites the participles *cleft* and *left* as both having the *f* sounded like *v* in *of*, preposition, which he distinguishes as we do from the adverb *off*, and he compares the sound in *of*, *cleft*, to the Latin *v*, that in *off* to the Greek Φ, but Gil ascribes to the *f* in *cleft* its normal sound. The present tendency is to make the plural of nouns in *rf*, like *wharf*, in *fs* rather than *ves*, and *f* in *of* probably retains the *v* sound, only to distinguish it from *off*.

G, in such words as *length*, *strength*, where we consider it a gross vulgarism to suppress it, appears to have been often silent. Churchyard spells these words *leynth*, *streynth*; John Knox *lenth* and *strenth*. The same forms occur in the Political Songs published by the Camden Society, and Halliwell gives several instances of the latter from old manuscript authorities. The combination *gh* was originally a guttural or perhaps a palatal, and it

appears to have had this peculiar force even down to the time of Gil.* “Græcorum X,” says he, “in initio nunquam usurpamus; in medio, et in fine, sæpe, et per *gh* malè experimimus.” He proposes a special character to express this sound, as standards for which, he cites *weight* and *enough*, in the text, and *bought*, in the table. He uniformly employs this character in *high*, *knight*, *though*, *through*, and other words of the same ending, but remarks that, in the common dialect, *enough* was often pronounced *enuff*, instead of with the guttural.

The rough aspirate *h* had formerly a much greater importance in the orthoepy of the European languages than it at present possesses.

The Greeks and Romans certainly normally articulated the Grecian rough breathing and the Latin *h*, but the modern Greeks, the Italians, the Spaniards, and the Portuguese, have lost the sound altogether, though they still retain *h* in their orthography, generally either to determine the sound of other consonants or to distinguish one word from another. It is slightly heard in French, except in very emphatic utterance, and some orthoepists deny that it is used at all. The present tendency of all the European languages is to its absolute suppression, and it is not impossible that it may vanish from even English orthoepy as completely as it has done from that of the South of Europe.† There seems to have been a good deal of embarrassment with respect to the use of the letter *h* in the Latin language. Manuscripts and inscriptions often omit or misapply it, but its omission where it ought properly to be aspirated, was nevertheless regarded as a flagrant violation of the rules of good taste. “If one,” says St. Augustine, freely translated, “contrary to the laws of orthoepy, murders the word *human* by calling it *uman*, without the aspiration, he will more offend his hearers than if he had committed a real *homicide*.”‡ The first step towards the abolition of the *h* in

* Shakespeare has :

Have you not heard it said full oft,
A woman's may doth stand for *nought*?

The Passionate Pilgrim, XIV.

† See Rietz, *Soenska Allmoge Spröket*, p. 288. Also Fanfani, *Vocabulario dell' Uso Toscano*, p. 469.

‡ Ut qui illa sonorum vetera placita teneat aut doceat, si contra disciplinam

English consisted in its suppression before the liquids *l*, *n*, and *r*. In Anglo-Saxon *ladder*, *ladle*, *lady*, *laugh*, were all written with the initial *hl*; *neck*, *nut*, and the verb to *neigh*, with *hn*; *ready*, *raven*, *ring*, with *hr*, and this was also the orthography of the same words in the Old-Northern. What the precise force of *h* was in this combination is uncertain, but as it is now a distinct rough breathing in these words in Icelandic, it probably had the same sound in Saxon. It disappeared very early from English words of this class, and these combinations do not occur in the Ormulum. A more important change in the use of the *h* was its transposition in words beginning with *hw*, (which is rather a Scandinavian than a Teutonic combination,) and its gradual suppression in the articulation of that combination. Saxon words beginning with *hw* are, in the Ormulum, in Layamon, and sometimes even in older Saxon authors, spelt with *wh*, and this derangement of the letters has been thought to indicate a difference of pronunciation. But in words of this class where we pronounce the *h* at all, we articulate it before the *w*, as for instance in *whale*. Although, therefore, in this combination the *h* orthographically follows, it orthoepically precedes the *w*, and this was probably the Anglo-Saxon pronunciation. Many of us remember when in *white* and other words of this class, at least in this country, the *h* was always distinctly heard, as it always ought to be. At present it is fast disappearing from this combination. This is a corruption which originated, not with the vulgar, but in French influence and the affectations of polished society. The combination of *h* and *w*, or *h* and *v*, occurs in the Scandinavian languages, but it does not at present exist in German.* In some of the Scandinavian local dialects, the *h* is still sounded before *v*, in others it is no longer heard, the influence of the Romance languages having there, as it has in a much more marked way in England, tended to bring about the suppression of the aspiration. The process appears to have commenced at an early period, for Lord Berners wrote, or

grammaticam, sine aspiratione primæ syllabæ, *ominem* dixerit, displiceat magis hominibus, quam si contra tua precepta hominem oderit, cum sit homo.

Conf. I. 29.

See also Cicero, ed. Schütz, p. 129.

* Zahn and other earlier philologists recognize *hw* or *hv* as existing in Mæso-Gothic orthoepy, but it is not admitted by Massmann, Diefenbach, or Stamm.

at least Pynson printed, *wo* and *who*, *were* and *where*, indifferently, and we may thence infer that the pronunciation had already begun to vacillate. Indeed, we find similar forms in Robert of Gloucester, but these may be dialectic.

The liquid *l* appears to have served in many combinations, in both early English and French, no other purpose than to lengthen, or otherwise modify, the vowel preceding; but as it was undoubtedly always articulated in Saxon, its suppression in such words as *half*, *calf*, *balm*, *calm*, and the like, is to be ascribed, if not to the reason assigned in a note to a previous page, to Norman influence.* In many words of Saxon origin, as for instance in *could* and *would*, it was generally pronounced until a recent period. The old New England pronunciation of these words was *coold*, *woold*, and Ben Jonson writes *I'ld* for *I'd*, the popular contraction of I would. In Gil's phonographic system, the *l* is always written in such words, and it was of course articulated. We have, on the other hand, in conformity to the corrected orthography of many words of French origin, recently introduced it in some cases where it was formerly silent. In the sixteenth century Englishmen wrote and pronounced *soudyours*, *assaut*. At a later period, they spelt and articulated the *l* in both, and it is worth noticing that the French have done the

* Suckling, in the middle of the seventeenth century, as appears by a passage quoted by Alibone, under *Carew*, pronounced *fault* with a silent *l*, for he rhymes it with laureate:

Tom Carew was next, but he had a *fault*,
That would not well stand with a *laureat*.

Laneham, in 1575, wrote *skro* for scroll. This pronunciation suggests a probable etymology for a word which has much embarrassed lexicographers. The Icelandic noun *skrá* means *skin* or *parchment*, whence the verbs *skrá* and *skrásetja*, to write or record. From *skrá* comes the old Danish *Skraa*, (pronounced *skro*.) a written ordinance or law, and I think also our *scroll*, and the Norman English *escrow*. *Serowis* occurs in Wycliffe, Matth. xxiii. 5.

In Richard Coer de Lion, Weber, II. 133, we find :

Looke every mannys name thoro wryte
Upon a *serowis* of parcheymn, &c.

And in Capgrave, p. 260 : "In this tyme the Lolardis set up *Serowis* at Westminster and at Poules, with abhominable accusaciones of hem that long to the cherk," &c.

Swift, Boston ed., Vol. II., p. 545, uses *seraw* for *turf*. (Italian *cotica*, *sward*.)

same thing with respect to the former word, the *souldard* of older writers, itself a corruption of a still earlier form, *souldard*, having become the *soldat* of recent times. There are many instances in the English poetry of the sixteenth, and earlier centuries, where the liquid *l* stands for a syllable of itself. For example, the preterites or participles *dazzled* and *humbled* must have been pronounced as trisyllables, *dazzeled*, *humbleled*. Traces of this pronunciation yet remain in both England and this country. Ignorant persons call the elm tree *ellum*, and *hellum* is the regular nautical pronunciation of *helm*.*

The former English pronunciation of the letter *r* was probably much the same as in the modern French. "*R*," says Ben Jonson, "is the dog's letter and *hurreth* in the sound, the tongue striking the inner palate with a trembling about the teeth. It is sounded firm in the beginning of words, and more liquid in the middle and end, as *rarer*, *riper*."

The Anglo-Saxon alphabet, as I have more than once had occasion to observe, had two characters corresponding to those of the Icelandic, to express the two sounds of *th*, which are absurdly distinguished by many grammarians as respectively the *flat* and *sharp* articulations. According to analogy with the Old-Northern, the character þ should represent *th* in *thin*, or the Greek Θ; ð, *th* in *this*, or the modern Greek Δ, and there is little doubt that this was their original force. But in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, the two are often confounded or interchangeably employed, and some grammarians have even supposed that in that orthography, their sounds were precisely the reverse of those appropriated to them in the Scandinavian alphabet. In any event it seems quite certain that we have in many cases substituted the hard sound for the soft, and the contrary, though we cannot determine when the change took place.†

The recent introduction of the *w*, in the combination *wh* in several words, is remarkable. *Whole*, in the Saxon root, and the

* See note at page 410.

† White argues that *th* was sounded as *t* in Shakespeare's time, but Ben Jonson in the *Masque of Augurs* writes the foreign pronunciation of Van Goose, affecting to be an Englishman, as *ting* for *thing*, *noting* for *nothing*, which he would not have done had such been the usual pronunciation. See also Ben Jonson's *English Grammar*, which is decisive on this point.

corresponding word in the cognate languages, were without the *w*, and *whole* and its derivatives were usually written without it in English, until the latter part of the sixteenth century.* So *hot*, which in Anglo-Saxon was spelt with *h* only, occasionally received a *w* at the same period. *Whortleberry* is an instance of the same sort. Whether the *w* was ever articulated in *whole*, *wholesome*, or in *whot*, we cannot determine, but it is difficult to account for its introduction on any other supposition. On the other hand, this semi-vowel has been rejected from the orthography of many words where it was once written and pronounced, and it is silent in pronunciation in many words where it is still written. Several Saxon words began with *wl*. These are all, I believe, obsolete, though we have derivatives of two of them in *lukewarm*, and *loth*, *loathe*, and *loathsome*. These last words, as well as one or two others, retained the initial *w* until the fifteenth century, and it doubtless had some orthoepical force, though we cannot pronounce upon its precise character. It was unquestionably anciently articulated before *r*, in such words as *write*, *wrong*, *wrench*, &c. What its precise force was cannot now be ascertained, but it appears to have had a distinct sound, in such combinations, till near the end of the sixteenth century, and even later if the authority of Mulcaster and Gil is to be relied on. The former says in express terms, that *w* is a consonant in the word *wrong*, and Gil, whose phonography rejects all silent letters, retains the *w* in *wrath*, *wrathful*, *wretch*, and *wretched*. Even at the present day, in some of the English provincial dialects, the words *write*, *right*, *rite*, are all clearly distinguished in articulation.

From these remarks it will be evident that our present subject is involved in great obscurity, but, nevertheless, it seems a safe conclusion, that the pronunciation of our language has been upon the whole considerably softened, perhaps it would be more accurate to say, has become more confused, within the last two or three centuries, and is less clear, distinct, and sonorous than it was in earlier ages. I have endeavored to show, in a previous lecture, that the art of printing is exerting a restorative influence

* *Whole* may possibly be from the Anglo-Saxon *wa l g*; but the etymological analogies of the sister-tongues are to the contrary; and as *w* never entered into the orthography of *whole* until Anglo-Saxon was forgotten, the derivation from *h a l* is more probable.

on English pronunciation. The study of AngloSaxon and Old-English grammar will be attended with like results. We may, therefore, hope that the further corruption of our orthoepy will be arrested, and that we may recover something of the fulness and distinctness of articulation, which appear to have characterized the ancient Anglican tongue.*

* Scholars familiar with Ellis's learned and able essay on Early English pronunciation will find many of the foregoing observations superfluous, many more, I fear, ill-founded ; but it is too late for me to attempt a revision of my statements, and I must let them go for what they are worth, contenting myself with referring to the labors of Mr. Ellis as not only more complete, but as better authority than my own.

I would also once more refer the reader to a very able article on this subject in the *North American Review*, 1864.

LECTURE XXIII.

RHYME.

AN important difference between the great classes of languages which we have considered in former lectures—those, namely, abounding in grammatical inflections, and those comparatively destitute of them—is the more ready adaptability of the inflected tongues to the conventional forms of poetical composition. In other words, they more easily accommodate themselves to those laws of arrangement, sequence, and recurrence of sound—of rhythm, metre, and rhyme—by which verse addresses itself to the sensuous ear and enables that organ, without reference to the subject, purport, or rhetorical character of a given writing, to determine whether it is poetry or prose. An obvious element in this facility of application to poetical use, is the independence of the laws of position in syntax which belongs especially to inflected languages, for it is evidently much easier to give a prosodical form to a period, if we are unrestricted in the arrangement of the words which compose it, than if the parts of speech are bound to a certain inflexible order of succession. Metrical convenience has introduced inversion among the allowable licenses of English poetry, and some modern writers have indulged in it to a very questionable extent; but at all events its use is necessarily very limited, and it cannot be employed at all without some loss of perspicuity. A more important poetical advantage of a flectional grammar, is the abundance of consonances which necessarily characterizes it. Wherever there are uniform terminations for number, gender, case, conjugation, and other grammatical accidents, where there are augmentative, diminutive, and frequentative forms, there of course must be a corresponding copiousness of rhymes. English, possessing few inflections, has no large classes of similar endings. On the contrary, it is rich in variety of terminations, and for that reason poor in con-

sonances. The number of English words which have no rhyme in the language, and which, of course, cannot be placed at the end of a line, is very great. Of the words in Walker's Rhyming Dictionary, five or six thousand at least are without rhymes, and consequently can be employed at the end of a verse only by transposing the accent, coupling them with an imperfect consonance or constructing an artificial rhyme out of two words. Of this class are very many important words well adapted for poetic use, such as *warmth, month, wolf, gulf, sylph, music, breadth, width; depth, silver, honor, virtue, worship, circle, epic, earthborn, iron, citron, author, echo*; others, like *courage, hero*, which rhyme only with words that cannot be used in serious poetry; others again which have but a single consonance, as *babe, astrolabe, length, strength*. Our poverty of rhyme is perhaps the greatest formal difficulty in English poetical composition. In the infancy of our literature, it was felt by Chaucer, who concludes the Complaint of Mars and Venus with this lamentation :

And eke to me it is a great penaunce,
Sith rime in English hath soch scarcite,
To folow word by word the curiosite,
Of Graunson, flour of hem that make in Fraunce.

The successors of Chaucer have felt the burden of the embarrassment, if they have not echoed the complaint.

Walker's Rhyming Dictionary contains about thirty thousand words, including the different inflected forms of the same word. In this list the number of different endings is not less than fourteen or fifteen thousand, and inasmuch as there are in the same list five or six thousand words or endings without rhyme, as I have already stated, there remain about nine thousand rhymed endings to twenty-five thousand words, so that the average number of words to an ending, or, which comes to the same thing, the number of rhymes to the words capable of rhyming, would be less than three. The Rhyming Dictionary indeed contains scarcely half the English words admissible in poetry, and of those that form its vocabulary, many are wholly un-English and unauthorized, but there is no reason to suppose that the proportions would be changed by extending the list.

If we compare our own with some of the Romance languages,

we shall find a surprising difference in the relative abundance and scarcity of rhymes.

The Spanish poet Yriarte, in a note to his poem *La Música*, states the number of endings in that language at three thousand nine hundred only, among which are a large number that occur only in a single word. Now as the Spanish vocabulary is a copious one, we shall be safe in saying that there are probably more than thirty thousand Spanish words capable of being employed in poetry. The inflections are very numerous, and while our verb *love* admits of but seven forms, namely, *love, loves, lovest, loveth, lovedest, loving, and loved*, the corresponding Spanish verb *amar* has more than fifty. Nouns distinguish the numbers; pronouns and adjectives generally, and articles always, both genders and numbers, and we may assume that the words, upon an average, admit of at least three forms. This would give about one hundred thousand forms with less than four thousand endings, or twenty-five rhymes to every word. This is but a rough estimate, and it must be observed that, from the strictness of the laws of Castilian prosody, as compared with the Italian, many rhymes, which Tasso would have used without scruple, would be disapproved in Spanish, except in ballads and other popular poetry. Words of the *same class*, whose consonance depends wholly on grammatical ending, are sparingly coupled, and absolute coincidence of sound is disallowed, as in most other languages. Hence, while *amaba* and *callaba* would be regarded as a license, *hallaba* and *callaba* would be inadmissible. For this reason, and because also the article and other unimportant words cannot well be used at the end of a verse, the number of Spanish rhymes available in practice is considerably less than the calculation I have just given would make it.

I am inclined to believe that the endings are more numerous, and consequently the rhymes fewer, in Italian than in Spanish, although still very abundant as compared with the poverty of English consonances; and this may explain the greater freedom of the Italian poets in the use of them.* Tasso even employs

* Rosasco, *Rimario Toscano*, Padova, 1768, gives the number of Italian endings at 5,042. The list of unrhymed words contains 500, each capable of two forms.

identical rhymes almost as liberally as Gower; and in the second canto of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* I find the following pairs: Viene conviene, face verb and face noun, voti devoti, immago mago, impone appone, irresolute solute, riveli veli, esecutrice vendicatrice, volto participle and volto noun, spiri sospiri, lamenti rammenti tormenti, sole console, compiacque piacquè, and nearly twenty more equally objectionable on the score of too perfect consonance.

Poverty in rhyme is one of the reasons why the talent of improvisation, so common and so astonishingly developed in degree in Italy, is almost unknown in England and among ourselves.* Besides the ease of rhyming, the general flexibility of the Italian language, and its great freedom of syntactical movement as compared with the rigidity of most other European tongues, adapt it to the rhythmical structure of verse as remarkably as the abundance of similar inflectional endings facilitates the search for rhymes. It is this quality of flexibility of arrangement which gives it so great an advantage over the Spanish in ease of versification, notwithstanding the greater number of like terminations in the latter. The structure of the Spanish period, whether in poetry or in

* To those who have not witnessed the readiness and dexterity of Italian improvisatori, their performances are incredible, and they are perhaps even more inexplicable to those who have listened to them. The following is an instance which fell under my own observation: An eminent improvisatore, in spending an evening in a private circle, was invited to give some specimens of his art. He composed and declaimed several short poems on subjects suggested by us, with scarcely a moment's preparation. They were in a great variety of metres, and very often accommodated to *bouts rimés*, or blank rhymes, furnished by the party, and purposely made as disparate as possible. In one instance, he communicated to me privately the general scope of thought to be woven into a sonnet, and proposed that the party should furnish the blank rhymes, a subject, and two lines from any Italian poet which might occur to us. He was then to accommodate the proposed train of thought to the rhymes and the subject, and to introduce the two verses which should be suggested. The rhymes were prepared, and the subject given was *the Penknife*. I remember but one of the lines which he was required to interweave. It was,

Vattene in pace, alma beata e bella !
(Depart in peace, fair and blessed soul !)

The sonnet, really a very spirited one, was composed and ready for delivery in less time than we had spent in collecting and arranging the rhymes.

prose, is comparatively cumbrous and formal; there are fewer dactylic feet, and less variety of accentuation; and hence it does not so readily accommodate itself to a metrical disposition of words as the Italian, which has the additional convenience of dropping or retaining the final vowel in many cases at pleasure.

It has been thought singular that with the multitude of like terminations, and the great sensibility of the Greek and Latin ear, neither rhyme, alliteration, nor accent should have become a metrical element of versification, but that, on the contrary, repetition of sound in all its forms should have been sedulously avoided. But the very abundance of similar endings suggests the reason why they were not used as a formal ingredient in the structure of verse. That which constantly forces itself upon us we do not seek after, but rather aim to avoid. It would, therefore, have been a departure from the principles of a taste so fastidious as that of the classic ages, artificially to multiply and emphasize coincidences of sound which, by the laws of the language, were continually presenting themselves unsolicited. The frequent recurrence of like sounds in those languages was unavoidable; it was a grammatical necessity, and if such sounds had been designedly introduced as rhymes, and thus made still more conspicuous, they could not but have been as offensive to the delicacy of ancient ears as excessive alliteration is to our own. To them such obvious coincidences appeared too gross to be regarded as proper instrumentalities in so ethereal an art as poetry, and they constructed a prosody depending simply upon the subtlest element of articulation, the quantity or relative length of the vowels.

The fastidiousness of taste increases with its refinement, and indeed, in many cases, the one is but another name for the other. When the poetic forms of classic Greece and Rome became more multifarious, and the rules of prosody and metrical structure more and more distinctly defined, we observe greater care in the avoidance, not merely of end-rhymes, but of all repetitions of sound, both in poetry and prose. There are some traces of the employment of rhyme and assonance in mere popular literature at a very remote period; and though none of the great poets of antiquity are supposed to have intentionally introduced either, yet their comparatively frequent occurrence in the works of Hesiod seems to show that in his time no very great pains were

taken to exclude them. The extant works of Hesiod comprise about twenty-three hundred lines or verses, and I find in these poems thirty pairs of consecutive rhymes, and about twenty instances where the same termination occurs with one or two intervening verses. In twice that number of verses in the Iliad and the Odyssey, I observe but twenty pairs of consecutive rhymes, generally repetitions of the same words, and about thirty recurrences of rhymes separated by one or two lines. The difference between the two poets is not likely to have been accidental, and it is not improbable that the more numerous critical revisions which the works of Homer passed through, eliminated some instances of what to the Greek ear was offensive. The rhymes in Hesiod in many cases occur in catalogues of proper names, and it is possible that they were designedly employed as helps to the memory, which would be more needed in a mere list of names than in a connected narrative. It should be observed with reference to both Hesiod and Homer, that the ancient accentuation in many instances doubtless made the rhymes much less conspicuous to the ear than they are by the modern modes of scanning, but still they could hardly have failed to be noticed.

The ancients in general avoided resemblances of sound in prose with almost equal solicitude, though they were perhaps even less scrupulous with regard to the repetition of the same word than we are in English; but there are passages in some of the more primitive prose writers where coincidence of syllable seems almost sought for. There is an example of this in Herodotus, familiar to every school-boy :

τοῖσι παρὰ σφίσι γινόμενοισι κροκοδείλοισι τοῖσι ἐν τῆσι ἀμασσησὶ.

The monotony of this passage must have struck every ear, and if, as some suppose, the ancient Greeks, like the modern, pronounced the diphthong *οι* like *ι* or our long *e*, the effect of so many repetitions must have been still more disagreeable. It would seem, then, that in the less artificial periods of Greek literature, coincidence of sound, in poetry and prose, if unsought for, was yet not very scrupulously avoided, and the systematic rejection of it is one of the refinements of a later age. There are, however, many instances where fastidious Greek and Latin writers of the most polished ages of ancient literature have, in-

tentionally or unintentionally, admitted more or less perfect consonances and repetitions of sound.* Ovid has many rhyming couplets, and Cicero says in prose, "bellum autem ita suscipiatur ut nihil aliud nisi pax quæsitâ videatur." Lander notes that the great orator in one of his moral treatises uses the verb *possum* in some of its forms seven times in fourteen lines. The same critical trifler has spent some of his many hours of laborious idleness in hunting up cacophonies of various sorts in Plato, to whom he seems to owe a particular grudge; but, nevertheless, it was certainly a rule of both Greek and Latin composition, that all coincidences of sound, except those of quantity in verse, were to be avoided.

Notwithstanding the modern love of consonance, we in general abstain from it where it is not essential to the form of composition employed, and a rhyming couplet in blank verse, except occasionally at the end of a paragraph in dramatic or dithyrambic poetry, is felt at once as an unwarrantable license. Rhyme

* Mullach, *Grammatik der Griechischen Vulgareprache*, p. 78, cites a passage of rhymed prose from Plato, Symp. p. 197, D., *πρὸς τῆρα μὲν πορίζων, ἀγρίοτητα δ' ἐξορίζων*, etc., through several pairs of consonances, and two couplets of rhymed verse from a speech of Strepsiades in the *Clouds* of Aristophanes, 707. Cicero, Tusc. Disp., I. 28, and III. 19, quotes rhyming verses from Ennius; but the rule of Quintilian, whom Roger Ascham triumphantly appeals to in the Scholemaster, is express in its condemnation of like endings—*similiter desinentia*. See Quint. IX. c. 4. See also Fuch, III.^{tes} Abschnitt.

In the literature of the Middle Ages, we sometimes meet with rhymes in prose, in works where we should least expect to find them. Thus, in the Saxon Chronicle, MLXXXVII., p. 296, Ingram's edition, there is a long passage with a great number of rhyming words at irregular intervals.

The Old French Books of the Kings are full of passages where the frequent rhymes must have been intentional. Thus, p. 5: "Del présent out primes Deus sa *part*, puis al évesche fist bel *reguard*. Et si li dist: Sire, sire, entend à *mei*; jo sul la tue ancele ki jà devant *teï* prieïeres *fie*, E pur cest enfant dunc Deu *requis*; il me le dunad à sun *plaisir*, et je li rend pur lui *servir*." P. 7, "Par pri, par force, les dames *violèrent*; le pople del sacrifice *tresturnèrent*. Del sacrifice pristrent à *sei*, par rustie et par *desrei*, plus que n'en out cumanded la *lei*." P. 8, "Yostre fame n'est mie *seine*, kar à mal le pople *meine*; ne faites mais tel *uverainne*, dunt le sacrifice *remaigne*. Si hom pèche vers altre, à Deu se purrad *acorder*, e s' il pèche vers Deu ki purrad pur lui *preier*? tant tendrement les fols *ama* que rednement ne's *chastia*; par bel les reprint e par *amur*, nient par destrece ne par *reddur*, cume apent a maistre e à *pastur*."

strikes us no less disagreeably, if it happens to occur between two emphatic words in prose, as does also a metrical structure, which, unless it is wholly accidental, has much the same effect as a dancing step in the walk of a reverend senior. Those who are acquainted with the admirably told German tales of *Museus*, will remember the comic, mock-heroic air thrown over the narrative by the occasional introduction of a succession of iambs, and our newspapers often contain prose articles rendered equally ludicrous by interspersing rhyming words now and then. There are indeed instances in rhetoric, both ancient and modern, of the happy employment of like sounds, but the attempt to introduce them artificially into oratory, generally serves no other purpose than to exemplify the proverb, and to prove experimentally that "there is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous." It is remarkable that neither the fine ear of Fisher Ames, nor the taste of his dignified audience, was offended by the repetitions of sound in a passage of his celebrated speech on the British Treaty: "This day we undertake to render account to the widows and orphans whom our decision will *make*; to the wretches that will be roasted at the *stake*; to our country, &c., &c." Here, of course, the consonance could not have been other than an accidental one, but it does not appear to have been noticed as a blemish, though in general such coincidences are peculiarly disagreeable. The Spanish ear is so nice on this point, according to an eminent writer of that nation, that the *asonante*, or imperfect rhyme, where the vowels are the same, with different consonants, as *fame*, *state*, *make*, *cane*, though it is employed as an element of verse in certain poetic forms, is offensive in prose, if the *asonantes* happen to terminate two or three phrases or members of a period in near succession.*

There is perhaps a further reason why coincidence of sound should have been unsought on the one hand, and disregarded on the other, if it chanced to occur in Greek poetry. The bardic lays of ancient Greece were probably not committed to writing, and they were chanted or sung at entertainments, public or pri-

* Aun en la prosa les ofende el mero asonante quando se halla en palabras que terminan el sentido de frases poco distantes unas de otras.—Yriarte, notes to la Música.

vate. Now, though persons taught the modern school-boy sing-song way of reading poetry strongly emphasize the rhyme, yet in singing, or in modulated recitation, we scarcely observe it when it occurs, or miss it when it does not. We cannot indeed positively say that a like difference existed between ancient reading and chanting, but it is not violently improbable that when the Theogony or the Works and Days of Hesiod were sung by the author or his successors, his rhymes may have passed unnoticed; and with respect to Homer, whose immortal poems were handed down from age to age by oral delivery and transmission, it may be supposed, as already hinted, that when they were written down, and edited, as we know they were, by a long succession of copyists and scholiasts, original peculiarities, now felt to be unpleasant departures from the received canons of poetry, were struck out.

To discuss the historical origin of rhyming versification would lead me too far from my subject. The word *rhyme* is not derived from the Græco-Latin *rhythmus*. It is of original Gothic stock, and ought to cast off the Greek garb, in which the pedantic affectation of classical partialities, and the desire to help the theory that ascribes to the thing, as well as to the name, a Latin origin, have dressed it. The proper spelling is simply *rime*, and though rhyming cannot be shown to have been practised among the Gothic tribes earlier than elsewhere in Europe and the East, yet it probably sprung up among them spontaneously, as a natural poetical form of the language, just as it did among some of the Oriental nations. In any event, the current supposition that its first invention belongs to the monkish poetry of the middle ages, and that other modern theory which traces it to the Celtic bards, rest alike on a very insufficient foundation. But whether it was indigenous to the Gothic nations or not, it fell in so naturally with the love of alliteration and other coincidence of sound which characterizes all the branches of that great family, that it found ready acceptance among them as soon as models of rhyming versification were presented to them.

The passionate admirers of classical literature in the sixteenth century stoutly opposed the employment of rhyme, as a barbarous innovation on the consecrated forms of the art. Roger Ascham says, that Cheke and Watson held our "rude beggarly rhyming to have been first brought into Italy by Gothes and

Hunnes," and that to "follow rather the Gothes in rhyming than the Greekes in trew versifying, were even to eate acornes with swyne, when we may freely eate wheate bread amonges men." Sir Philip Sidney complains of contemporaneous English poetry that "one verse did but beget another"; and so the whole became "a confused masse of words with a tinkling sound of ryme barely accompanied with reason." * But this is probably to be regarded less as a censure of the use than of the abuse of rhyme, for though he himself composed in almost all known ancient metres, yet he wrote by preference in rhymed verse, and used double, triple, and compounded rhymes with great freedom. He moreover formally defends rhyme in the following passage:

"Now of versifying there are two sorts, the one ancient, the other moderne: the ancient marked the quantitie of each syllable, and according to that framed his verse: the moderne observing only number, with some regard of the accent, the chief life of it standeth in that like sounding of the words, which we call ryme. Whether of these be the more excellent, would beare many speeches, the ancient, no doubt, more fit for musicke, both words and time observing quantity, and more fit lively to expresse divers passions, by the low or lofty sound of the well-weighed syllable. The latter likewise with his ryme striketh a certain musicke to the ear, and in fine, since it doth delight, though by another way, it obtaineth the same purpose, there being in either sweetnesse, and wanting in neither, Majestie, and truly the English, before any vulgar language I know, is fit for both sorts."

Ben Jonson's opinion of rhyming verse was more unfavorable, and he thus expresses his dislike of it:

Rime, the rack of finest wits,
That expresseth but by fits,
True conceits,
Spoiling senses of their treasure,
Cosening judgment with a measure,
But false weight,

Wresting words from their true calling,
Propping verse for fear of falling
To the ground,

* Defence of Poesie, ninth edition, p. 561.

Joining syllables, drowning letters,
Fasting vowels, as with fetters,
They were bound.

He that first invented thee,
May his joints tormented be,
Cramp'd forever !
Still may syllables jarre with time,
Still may reason warre with rime
Resting never, &c., &c.

Milton condemns rhyme as "the Invention of a barbarous Age, to set off wretched matter and lame metre; grac't indeed since by the use of some famous modern Poets, carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint, to express many things otherwise and for the most part worse then else they would have express them * * * * a thing of itself to all judicious eares triveal and of no true musical delight"; and he congratulates himself on having in *Paradise Lost* set the first example in English epic of avoiding "the jingling sound of like endings," and thus restored "to Heroic Poem ancient liberty from the troublesome and modern bondage of rimeing."

It can hardly be said that Milton's experiment was a successful one, for the slowness with which his great poem won its way to public favor is doubtless in some measure to be ascribed to its rejection of what the English ear demanded as an essential constituent of the poetic form. Milton has had many imitators, but blank verse has as yet established itself as a legitimate mode of English versification only in the heroic metre. The final rejection of rhyme from the metrical system of our language is as improbable, indeed as impossible we may say, as the abandonment of accentual rhythm and the return to prosodical quantity.

Until the seventeenth century, the ear of modern Europe was so little wearied with rhyme, that in spite of the protestations of the classical school, it fairly revelled in this new element of metrical sweetness. The same rhyme was often carried through a great number of verses, and in many poems all the stanzas have the same set of terminations, a sufficient variety to satisfy the taste of the times being obtained by differently arranging the rhymes in consecutive stanzas. Satiety at last produced a reaction which

concurrent with other influences in restricting the use of like endings, and we often meet with evidences of a disposition to avoid the use of repetitions of sound in prose. Thus, the Germans say *Auf-und Niedergang* for *Aufgang und Niedergang*, the Spaniards *facil-y subitamente* for *facilmente y subitamente*, and we *fair-* and *softly*, for *fairly* and *softly*.* The Tuscan canzone, in which the consonances are "few and far between," shows that even the rhyme-loving Italian feels the necessity of making the recurrence of this ornament less frequent, and its regularity less palpable, in the highest order of lyric poetry, than in lighter compositions. The modern license in the use of rhymes has grown, in great measure, out of a weariness of perpetual repetition, but it is partly founded on the example of earlier poets, who are mistakenly supposed often to have used imperfect rhymes, when in fact, in the orthoepy of their times, the consonance was complete.

The articulation, and, consequently, the prosody of languages, are much affected by the character of their grammatical inflections. Where inflections exist, the syntactical relations of the words and the intelligibility of the period depend upon them, and they must consequently be pronounced with a certain distinctness. The orthoepy of most languages inclines to make the inflectional element conspicuous. If it consists in the addition of syllables to the radical, then a principal, or at least a secondary accent will fall upon some of the variable syllables. The vowels, though few in number, will be of frequent occurrence, distinct in articulation, and well discriminated from each other. The consonants will be clear and detached in their pronunciation. If inflection is made by vowel-change, the vowels will be numerous and subtly distinguished, and the consonants, though more numerous, will become relatively less prominent. Examples of this may be found on the one hand in the small number of vowel-sounds and the clear, staccato articulation of the consonants in Italian and Spanish, and on the other in the obscurity of the consonants, and the multiplied shades of vowel-sound in the Danish. So long as the predominant mode of inflection in English was by the letter-change, the attention was constantly drawn to the essen-

* D'Esclot, CLXVIII., has *complidament e devota*.

tial quality of the vowel, and even a slight difference in this respect struck the ear more forcibly than at present, when inflection by terminal augment is so common. Hence, a departure from the law of strict consonance was much less likely to be tolerated, and I am persuaded that the number of imperfect rhymes in old English authors will be found to be constantly fewer as we advance in the knowledge of their orthoepy.

After the introduction of Norman words, with their augmentative inflections, the system of letter-change fell into great confusion, and all well-grounded principle of declension and conjugation seems to have been lost sight of. The derangement of the strong inflections continued for centuries, and the poets took advantage of this to vary the characteristic vowel in almost any way that suited the convenience of their rhymes. Guest sneers at the ignorance of those who suppose that Spenser's licenses in this respect were unauthorized innovations of his own, but I cannot assent to this view of the subject. For though Spenser may have found in ballads and other popular literature precedents for most of his inflectional extravagances, yet some of them, at least, were violations of the analogies of the language, and without the sanction of any really authoritative example. But the licenses of Spenser were by no means limited to anomalous vowel-changes, for he abbreviated or elongated words for the sake of rhythm or consonance as unscrupulously as he substituted an open vowel for a close, or the contrary. We have already seen that he loosely resolved the diphthongal *i* into its elements, and made *like* a disyllable rhyming with *seek*, and with equal boldness he cuts down *cherish* to *cherry*, that he may pair it off with *merry*, *embathe* to *embay*, for the sake of a rhyme to *away*, and converts *contrary* into a verb by dropping the final vowel; on the other hand he lengthens *nobless* into *nobleless*, and *dazzled* into *dazzeled*. Thomas Heywood uses double and triple rhymes with much grace and dexterity, and it is the more remarkable that so expert a versifier should have allowed himself to disguise so important a word as *Deity* for the sake of a consonance :

By the reflex of Iustice and true Piety,
It draws to contemplation of a Diety.

This, however, is but a tame license compared to that by which, in

the third book of the Hierarchie, he reduces the goodly polysyllable *intoxicated* to the humble form *'toast*.* But Heywood, like many old English writers, was of opinion that man is the lord, not the slave of language, and he often proved a hard master to the words that served him.

The great number of English words which are incapable of rhyme, and the few which agree in any one of our numerous endings, reduce the poet to a very limited variety of choice, and there are many pairs of words which are found as invariably together as *length* and *strength*, *breath* and *death*, or *wealth* and *stealth*. When you see *jollity* at the end of a line, you do not need your eyes to tell you that *frivolity* cannot be far off; *mountains* and *fountains* are as indissolubly united in rhyme as they are in physical geography, and if a poet qualifies an object as *frigid*, he never fails to inform you in the next line that it is also *rigid*.

The consequence of this perpetual repetition is a weariness of all exactness in rhymes, and a tendency to great license in the use of imperfect consonances. The proper relief is to be found, not in a self-indulgent laxity, a repudiation of the fetters of verse, but in a bold return to the poetical wealth, both of form and substance, of our ancient tongue; and the certainty that we shall there find unexhausted, though long neglected, mines of ores and gems, should be, for poetic natures, an argument of no small force for the study of primitive English.

There are, in both the Gothic and the Romance languages, equivalents or substitutes for rhyme, some of which have not been employed at all, others not systematically, in English poetry. The introduction of them well deserves inquiry, and the character of these devices, and the possibility of their restoration as metrical elements, will be considered and illustrated in other lectures.

* On the same page (edition of 1635, p. 134) there is a catachresis in the employment of *indenturing*, which makes it very enigmatical to all readers except those who know how legal indentures were anciently drawn up and cut apart.

LECTURE XXIV.

ACCENTUATION AND DOUBLE RHYMES.

THE modes of consonance which may be, and by different nations have been, employed as essential elements of the poetical form, are very various. The prosody or metrical system of the classical languages is founded on quantity, that of modern literature on accentuation. Each system necessarily excludes the characteristic element of the other, not indeed from accidental coincidence, or altogether, from consideration in practice, but from theoretical importance as an ingredient in poetic measure. Quantity, as employed by the ancients, has been generally supposed to consist simply in the length or relative duration of different syllables in time of utterance.* To us, mere quantity is so inappreciable, that we cannot comprehend how it could be made the basis of a metrical system. It is difficult to believe that, with any supposable sensibility of ear to the flow of time, a prosody could have been founded on that single accident of sound,

* The terms *long* and *short*, employed in popular English orthoepy, are usually wholly misapplied. Most of our vowels have two long sounds, and the corresponding short sounds are often expressed not by the same, but by different letters. The propriety of the terms *long* and *short*, as truly descriptive appellations, expressive, simply, of relative duration in time, is, to say the least, very questionable, even when applied to cases where the same character is employed for both. It is not true that short sounds, simply by a more leisurely utterance, necessarily pass into long ones, and vice versa, for if so, the short vowels of a slow delivery would be the long ones of a rapid pronunciation, which is by no means the fact. An attentive examination of the position of the organs of speech will show that between longs and shorts there is, generally at least, a difference in quality as well as in time. Syllables long by position, indeed, require more time for their utterance than ordinary short syllables, because they contain a greater number of successive articulations; but here, in modern orthoepy, the length is a property of the syllable, not of the vowel alone. How far, and in what way, position actually modified the pronunciation of the vowel itself, in ancient prosody, cannot now be determined, and of course we do not know whether in that case prosodical length belonged to the vowel, more or less, than in modern articulation.

and we cannot resist the persuasion that there entered into ancient prosody some yet undiscovered element, some peculiarity of articulation or intonation, that was as influential as the mere temporal length of vowels in giving a rhythmical character to a succession of syllables which, with the supposed ancient accentuation, is, to our ears, undistinguishable from prose.

Although, for want of appropriate native terms, we employ Latin and Greek designations of feet and measures, yet our modern accentual rhythm is in no sense an equivalent of the ancient temporal prosody, as it has sometimes been considered, but it is its representative, and, like some other representatives, very far from being a truthful expression of the primary constituency for which it answers. It is for this reason that every attempt to naturalize the classical metres in English verse, except in the very disputable case of the hexameter, has proved a palpable failure, and is in fact a delusion, because, from the want of parity between accent and quantity, they cannot strike the ear alike, and therefore the eye alone, or the fingers which count off the feet, can find any resemblance between the ancient metre and the modern. Indeed, what we imitate is not the original, but a figment which we have fabricated and set up in the place of it.

Simmius of Rhodes, and other half-forgotten ancient triflers, wrote short pieces in verses of different lengths, arranged in such succession that, when written down, the poem presented to the eye the form of an egg, an altar, a two-bladed battle-axe, or a pair of wings, and the likeness here was as real between the poem and the object, as it is between modern and ancient hexameters or Horatian metres.

The frequent coincidence between Latin prosodical quantity and the Italian accent in the same words, and other points of apparent similarity in articulation, authorize the belief that in *sound*, these two languages resemble each other more nearly than any other pair of ancient and modern tongues, and of course, if ancient metres were capable of reproduction anywhere, it should be in Italy. Nevertheless, the attempt has hardly been made, except by way of experiment, and then with no such results as to encourage repetition.* What we call ancient metres have

* The Latin metres were fashioned upon, and borrowed from, those of the

proved best adapted to languages whose articulation differs most widely from that of the classic tongues, and the success of these metres has been in the inverse ratio of their actual resemblance to the prosody from which they have taken their names. The more explosive the accentuation, the more numerous the consonants; the less clear and pure the vowel, the more tolerable the modern travesty of the ancient metre: and the hexameter has become naturalized in Germany, not because it is like, but because it is unlike, the classical verse whose name it bears, and therefore is suited to a language of a totally different orthoepical character.* The pentameter has also, but *invitâ Minervâ*, been

Greeks, and the copy may be supposed to have been, in its essential features, closely conformable to the original; but it is a remarkable fact, that in the pronunciation of the two languages which now represent the Greek and the Latin, there is a difference that seems to point to a corresponding distinction in the orthoepy of the ancient mother tongues. In Italian, not uniformly, certainly, but in the great majority of cases, the accent, or stress of voice, falls on the syllable which, in the corresponding Latin word, was prosodically long. In modern Greek, on the other hand, no such coincidence between the present accent and the ancient quantity exists, and the accentuation is absolutely independent of the ancient metrical value of the syllables in the same words. Hence, though modern Italian poetry has assumed a new character by the adoption of new metres, and especially by the fetters of rhyme, yet there is very possibly some resemblance between the rhythms of modern and ancient Roman bards, whereas modern Greek measures, which are accentual and not temporal, and the prosodical movement of ancient Hellenic poetry, seem to have nothing in common. The partial resemblance between the old Latin quantity and the new Italian accentuation is one of the circumstances that serve to explain why, even after the introduction of modern rhymes and modern measures into Latin poetry, the classical metres were also kept up in mediæval Latin, and both systems of prosody employed concurrently. It is true, that even after the first appearance of the accentual, or as the most important early form of it is called, the political metre of modern Greek, hexameters and other verses constructed after the ancient rules sometimes occur, but the co-existence of the two systems was much less general, and of briefer duration, in Greece than in Italy.

* The greater proportion of unaccented syllables in German, renders that language better suited to the classical, and especially the dactylic, measures than the English. A literal translation from English into German occupies from a third to a fourth more space in letterpress in the latter than in the former. The number of words, from the resemblance between the two in syntactical movement, is about equal in a given period, and the accents do not differ much in frequency. The syllables in German contain, upon an average, more letters than in English. but the difference in this respect is not

introduced into German, and the use of this most disagreeable and unmelodious of measures has, for an un-Germanic ear at least, spoiled what would otherwise be some of the finest poems in all the literature.*

sufficient to account for the difference in the space occupied by the original, and by a version from one to the other. It is occasioned chiefly by the greater number of syllables in German, resulting from the greater proportion of augmentative inflections in its syntax.

* The beauty of Schiller's *Spaziergang*, for instance, is sadly impaired by the halting movement of its verse, and the shock to the reader's nerves from the sudden earthward plunge which Pegasus makes at the end of every alternate line. If any thing were wanting to prove that ancient prosody could not have been accentual, sufficient evidence might be found in its admission of a metre which accentual scanning makes so repulsive.

The recent experiments in the way of reviving the hexameter in English have certainly been much more successful than those of the sixteenth century, but I believe there is little disposition to attempt to resuscitate the pentameter in English verse. It is surprising that so exquisite an ear as that of Spenser could content itself with such rhythms as those of his essays in classical metre, and we can hardly think him serious in offering such lines as these as specimens :

See yee the blindfolded pretie God, that feathered Archer,
Of Louers Miseries which maketh his bloodie Game ?
Wote ye why, his moother with a Veale hath couered his face ?
Trust me, leas he my Looue happely chance to beholde.

Spenser had as much difficulty in theory as in practice in reconciling accentual rhythm with classic quantity. "The accents," he says, in his letter to Harvey in Haslewood's collection, "sometime gapeth, and as it were yawneeth ill-favouredly, coming shorte of that it should, and sometime exceeding the measure of the Number, as in *Carpenter*, the middle sillable being vsed shorte in speache, when it shall be read long in verse, seemeth like a lame Gosling, that draweth one legge after hir ; and *Heauen*, being vsed shorte as one sillable, when it is in verse, stretched out with a *Diastole*, is like a lame Dogge that holdes up one legge."

Among all the various attempts to present an ancient poem to modern readers in a form supposed to be analogous to its ancient shape, I know of none where the success is more doubtful than in Newman's Homer. The "blind old man of Scio's rocky isle" is reported to have earned a precarious livelihood by chanting, on festive occasions, the ballads which Pisistratus long after collected and arranged in the form in which we now possess them, as a consecutive series of poems. Mr. Newman has attempted to give them, in an English version, a form corresponding to that in which they were originally composed and delivered. I am not disposed to question the spirit or fidelity of this translation, and upon European ears, which are, of course, less familiar than ours with our national serio-comic melody, the metre may not

The poetic measures of the Anglo-Saxon and the Scandinavian tongues are founded wholly on accentual rhythm, though the most ancient Gothic verses are by no means always capable of resolution into poetic feet.

The *Ormulum*, in many respects one of the most interesting

produce a ludicrous effect ; but to an American it has altogether the air of an attempt to set the *Iliad* to the tune of *Yankee Doodle*. The following are specimens :

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Maiden Athene thereupon
 Courage bestow'd and enterprise,
 Might in pre-eminence be seen
 About his helmet and his shield
 In fashion of autumnal star,
 Blazeth abroad irradiant,
 Such fire around his head she then
 And urg'd him to the midmost ranks,</p> | <p>on Diomed Tydides
 that he mid all the Argives
 and earn excelling glory.
 unwearied fire she kindled,
 which, when in ocean washed,
 beyond the host of heaven ;
 and down his shoulders kindled,
 where'er the rout was thickest.</p> |
| <p>2. Thick as the flakes of snow may fall
 When Jove the Counsellor is bent
 Snowing on mortals : mid the lull
 Until the lofty mountain-peaks
 And eke the lotus-bearing plains
 Yea, and along the hoary brine
 Save where the billows washing up
 Are all things over-wrapt, when'er</p> | <p>upon a day of winter,
 his weapons to exhibit,
 of winds he sheds it constant,
 and outmost knolls it cover,
 and the fat tilth of peasants ;
 the shores and creeks it lineth,
 repel it ; but beyond them
 the storm from Jove is heavy.</p> |
| <p>3. So with a loud crash down he dropt,
 His hair, that with the Graces vied,
 And ample tresses, which with gold
 As when in solitary dell,
 A man may kindly rear a shoot
 Dainty and all-luxuriant ;
 From diverse-blowing winds ; and it
 But sudden cometh wind indeed,
 And from its own pit wrencheth it,
 Such then the ashen-spared son
 Beneath Atrides Menelas</p> | <p>and o'er him clang'd his armour.
 was now with gore besprinkled,
 and silver were embraided.
 where rife spring-water bubbleth,
 of easy-sprouting olive,
 and round it breezes rustle
 with a white flower buddeth :
 with plenteous weight of tempest,
 and on the earth out-layeth.
 of Panthoofs,—Euphorbus,—
 was slain and stript of armour.</p> |

The metre of Mr. Newman's translation is indeed the same as that of the *Ormulum*, which I shall have occasion to mention with praise. But it is constructed with much less prosodical skill ; and while the easy, familiar flow of this rhythm is well adapted to the simple Saxon dialect of Ormin, with its multitude of liquid and vowel endings, and to the prosaic style of his narrative and discussion, nothing can be more unsuited, either to the Latinized diction and heavy, consonantal English of our day, or to the majestic movement and luxuriant imagery of the Homeric song.

relics of Old-English poetic literature, is strictly metrical in its movement, and of great regularity in the structure of its verse. It resembles Latin poetry in adopting the principle of the elision of the final vowel when followed by a word beginning with a vowel or aspirate, and in rejecting rhyme and alliteration, while its rhythm is accentual, like that of all modern poetry. Waiving the difference between temporal and accentual rhythm, the versification of the Ormulum closely resembles some ancient metres, and is therefore assumed to have been borrowed from them. I shall not debate the question in this particular case, but I must protest against the theories which assume that the pattern of all that is modern in literature is to be found in something that is old. There is a school which traces all recent forms of European verse, rhyme itself included, to Latin classical or mediæval poetry, all Latin metrical forms to Greek, all Greek poetic measures to Sanscrit, and here, fortunately, for want of a new literary continent beyond, the pedigree abruptly stops. Resemblance of form between different languages, or their literary adaptations, may prove a community of nature in man, but not necessarily a historical descent of one from the other, or even a relationship between them. Recurrence is not always repetition, and it is not in the slightest degree improbable that like thoughts, images, poetic phrases and poetic measures should originate spontaneously in nations and ages that have nothing in common but their innate humanity. The pride of investigation must end somewhere, and we may as well admit ultimate facts in man as in brute nature.

I will illustrate the prosody of the Ormulum by a modernization of the first twenty-two verses, in the same metre as the text, and I may observe that the original is so purely English in vocabulary and grammar that most of the words I employ are the same in form and syntactical arrangement as in the text :

Now, brother Walter, brother mine,
 After the flesh's nature ;
 And brother mine in Christenty
 By baptism and believing ;
 And brother in the house of God
 Eke in another manner,
 In that we-two have taken up
 One priestly rule to follow,

Both canons are in rank and life
 As holy Austin 'stablished ;
 I now have done e'en as thou badst,
 And thy desire fulfilled,
 For into English I have turned
 The Gospel's sacred teachings,
 According to the little gift
 Which God to me hath granted.
 Thou thoughtest that it might right well
 Yield Christian souls much profit,
 If English folk, for love of Christ,
 Would faithfully it study,
 And follow it, and it fulfil,
 In thought, in word, in doing.*

* Nu, broþerr Wallterr, broþerr min
 Aftterr þe fæshess kinde ;
 & broþerr min Crisstenndom
 þurh fulluhht & þurh trowwþe ;
 & broþerr min i Godess hus,
 Yet o þe þride wise,
 þurh þatt witt hafenn takenn ba
 An reghellboc to follghenn,
 Unnderr kanunnkess had & lif,
 Swa summ Sannt Awwstin sette ;
 Icc hafe don swa summ þu badd,
 & forþedd te þin wille,
 Icc hafe wennd intill Ennglissh
 Goddspelless hallghe lare,
 Aftterr þatt little witt tatt me
 Min Drihhtin hafeþþ lenedd.
 þu þohhtest tatt itt mihhte wel
 Till mikell frame turmenn,
 Yiff Ennglissh folk, forr lufe off Crist,
 Itt wollde yerne lernenn,
 & follghenn itt, and fillenn itt
 Wiþþ þohht, wiþþ word, wiþþ dede.

The metrical construction of this poem is so skilful, and its accentual rhythm so perfectly preserved, that though we are constantly expecting the rhyme, we scarcely observe that it is wanting, and it seems to me one of the most dexterous compromises between the classical and modern prosodical systems which occur

* For want of the proper type, I am obliged to use in this extract, as well as in that in Lecture xix., sometimes *y* and sometimes *g*, where the original employs a Saxon character.

in the early poetry of any recent literature. There exists but a single manuscript, a mutilated fragment, of this remarkable poem, and there is strong reason to suppose that this is from the hand of the author himself. The lines are written continuously, like prose, but they are so marked by points as to show that they consist of fifteen syllables divided by a pause after the eighth, the first hemistich containing four iambic feet, the latter two iambs and an amphibrach. Theoretically, we may consider the prosody of the Ormulum as composed of verses of six iambs and an amphibrach, thus :

And follow it and it fulfil | in thought, in word, in doing ;

or of couplets consisting alternately of eight and seven syllabled lines divided into feet, like the hemistichs of the long lines, thus :

In that we-two have taken up
One priestly rule to follow.

Upon the former view, the versification would be closely assimilated to that of many Latin poems of the middle ages, as well as to certain still earlier poetic forms, and the want of rhymes and of alliteration favors this theory. By the latter division, it would nearly resemble metres very extensively diffused through all modern literature, and then the difference in the length of the lines, and the alternate single and double endings, would be very noticeable and important particulars.

The Ormulum was probably never put in circulation. The author hints that he was subject to the persecutions to which all who attempted to clothe the mysteries of religion in the vulgar tongue were exposed during the sway of the Romish church, and the mutilated condition of the manuscript may perhaps be ascribed to ecclesiastical hostility. Although, therefore, there were other early English poems in forms partaking of the characteristics of both ancient and modern prosody, we cannot ascribe to the Ormulum any influence upon the structure of later English verse, and it stands as a unique example of greater skill in versification than had yet been attained in the Anglican tongue.

The poets of the present day are striving to invent new forms and combinations, to emancipate themselves from some of the conventional restraints of verse, to loosen the fetters which they

cannot wholly throw off, and to infuse fresh life and spirit into movements of the muses which perpetual repetition has made wearisome and ungraceful. As the ballet-master has revived the dances of the chivalric ages, and borrowed from rural districts and distant provinces complicated figures, giddy whirls, and bold saltations, so the bard has evoked from forgetfulness and obscurity antiquated forms, abrupt changes and quaint devices, sometimes, no doubt, to give appropriate expression to an inspiration which finds no fit utterance in the moulds of stereotyped verse, but not less frequently to hide poverty of thought beneath the ill-sorted coloring and dazzling glitter of a strange and gaudy raiment. It is for such reasons, good and bad, that recent poets have reintroduced double and tri-syllabic rhyme, which had become nearly obsolete, into serious verse, and thus denationalized our poetry by employing an ornament for the most part foreign in both form and material.

The use of double rhymes is not well suited to the Saxon constituent of our language, since the dropping of so many of the unaccented and less conspicuous inflections; for double rhymes seldom occur in words of Saxon origin, except in the past tense and participle of the weak verbs and in the present participle with its disagreeable, unmelodious ending in *-ing*. Chaucer seems to affect monosyllabic rhymes in his verse, and indeed seldom employs double ones, unless we count as such words in *e* final, which perhaps we should do, for there is no doubt but this letter was sounded in Chaucer's time, as it is now in the cognate languages, and in French verse. In the reign of Elizabeth, the study of Spanish and Italian literature led to the very frequent employment of polysyllabic rhymes; and though not much used by Spenser, they continued in fashion down to the era of the Restoration. At that period, French influence became predominant; many, not only of the original characteristics of English literature, but of the forms of verse which English poets had borrowed from the bards of Southern Europe, disappeared for a time, and double rhymes ceased to be used in serious compositions, until the necessities of the present century revived them.

French verse, indeed, not only admits but requires the alternate use of double rhymes; but as the last syllable in this case is only the obscure *e*, which is very faintly articulated, English poets felt

that a monosyllabic rhyme, with its pause, was a nearer approximation to the French feminine rhyme, as it is called, than our few dissyllabic consonances, which are much more generally spondees than trochees, could furnish.

I have spoken of double and triple rhymes as foreign in form as well as material. It is true that many, perhaps most, of the words forming trisyllabic or dactylic, and dissyllabic or trochaic rhymes, existed in the language, and were employed in poetry, long before the sixteenth century, but they were almost all borrowed from the French, and brought with them an accentuation which threw the stress of voice on the last syllable; so that although now dactylic or trochaic in pronunciation, they originally furnished monosyllabic rhymes only. This position of the accent shows how, in Chaucer, *motion* and *nation*, *company* and *chivalry*, *fellonie* and *jealousie*, *abstinaunce* and *countenaunce*, *apparence* and *existence*, form perfect rhymes, as they do in French at the present day; and how Spenser, who employs very few double endings, makes *Tantalus*, *victorious*, and *dolorous* rhyme to each other.

It is interesting to observe the gradual naturalization of the orthoepy of foreign words in the English tongue. Languages of the class to which English belongs, inflect much by letter-change. This change takes place in the radical, which is usually found in the first syllable; and as inflections, of whatever character, must be distinctly pronounced and made conspicuous in order to mark the grammatical relations, the first syllable, or that in which the letter-change occurs, naturally receives the stress of voice. Hence, in all these languages, there is a tendency to throw the principal accent so far back as to reach the radical. The vocabulary of the French is derived, to a great extent, from Latin words deprived of their terminal inflections. The French adjectives *mortal* and *fatal* are formed from the Latin *mortalis* and *fatalis* by dropping the inflected syllable; the French nouns *nation* and *condition* from the Latin ablative case *natione*, *conditione*, by rejecting the *e* final.* In most cases, the last syllable retained in the French derivative was prosodically long in

* Some etymologists hold the derivation of these words to be from the Latin *accusative* rather than from the ablative.

the Latin original, and either because it was also accented, or because the slight accent which is perceivable in the French articulation represents temporal length, the stress of voice was laid on the final syllable of all these words. When we borrowed such words from the French, we took them with their native accentuation, and as accent is much stronger in English than in French, the final syllable was doubtless more forcibly enunciated in the former than in the latter language.* The introduction of these words was accordingly a disturbing element in Old-English orthoepy, and as the influence of this element was strengthened by the fact that many English words were inflected by the weak or augmentative method, and of course not accented on the first syllable, the whole accentual system of the language was deranged, and centuries elapsed before the radical principles of Gothic articulation recovered their ascendancy. Words were accented according to their etymology, not in conformity with the genius of the language, and there is even yet a conflict on this very point between the Saxon and the Romance ingredients of our mother-tongue. In Chaucer's time, the words I have quoted from him were all accented on the last syllable; *motiõn, natiõn; companý, chivalrý; countenaunce, abstinãunce*, and this accentuation continued without much change until the middle of the sixteenth century. Roger Ascham, the classical tutor of the Princess, afterwards Queen Elizabeth, much commends the following hexameter couplet by Mr. Thomas Watson, as being "translated plainlie for the sense, and roundlie for the verse":

All travellers do gladly report great praise of Ulysses,
For that he knew many men's manners and saw many cities.

These lines, pronounced with the modern English accentuation, are not hexameters, or indeed metre of any sort; and we can scan them only by reading them thus:

† Although prosodical accent is essentially a more important feature in English than in French orthoepy, and therefore was always more conspicuously marked in the former, yet the difference in this respect does not appear to have been as great between the two languages three hundred years ago as at present. This is evident from the care and minuteness with which Palsgrave discusses a subject almost wholly overlooked in modern French grammars, as well as from other evidence

All travellers do gladly report great praise of Ulysses,
For that he knew many men's manners, and saw many cities.*

The study of Italian literature, which became fashionable about this period, concurred with the inborn tendencies of English to revive the Saxon accentual system; for the Italian verbs, nouns, and adjectives retain a final inflected syllable, and though that syllable is distinctly articulated, the stress of voice never falls upon the ultima, except in a very few verbs and nouns which have lost the Latin inflectional ending, and in cases where, for metrical convenience, the final vowel has been dropped.

In Sir Philip Sidney's time, the Gothic pronunciation was already so far restored, that our Gallicized Latin words had taken a principal accent at or near the beginning; but they still retained a secondary accent at or near the end of the word, and accordingly, while Chaucer made such words as *nation*, *station*, iambuses, or dissyllables with the accent on the last syllable, they had in Sidney's age become dactylic trisyllables. This is shown not only by the use which Sidney makes of them in poetry, but we have his express authority for the fact; for in his *Defense of Poesie*, after mentioning the masculine and feminine rhymes of the French in one and two syllables, respectively, and the *sdruc-ciolo* of the Italians, or dactyl, in three, he adds: "The English hath all three; as *do*, *true*, [masculine;] *father*, *rather*, [feminine or trochaic;] and *motion*, *potion*," [sdruc-ciolo or dactylic.] In like manner, Puttenham says that *remuneration* makes two good dactyls, *contribution* a spondee and dactyl. It is clear, therefore, from this and much other concurrent testimony, that in the sixteenth century, *mó-ti(shi)-on*, *pó-ti(shi)-on*, were pronounced trisyllabically, with a faint secondary accent on the last syllable; whereas at present the vowel of the final is obscurely articulated, the ultima and penultima have coalesced, and the words are dissyllabic and trochaic, or, at the end of a verse, spondaic. Spenser, in his *Sonnet on Scanderbeg*, makes

* Harvey, in criticising Spenser's accentuation, which seems to have been licentious enough, inquires whether he would pronounce *travailleurs*, and proceeds thus: "Or will Segnior Immerito bycause may happe, he hathe a fatbellyed Archedeacon on his side, take vppon him to controll Maister Doctor Watson for his *All travellers*, in a verse so highly extolled of Master Ascham?" —Haslewood, II., 279. Milton says *character*.

pyramids and *heroes* amphibrachs, *pyrámíds héróés*. Ben Jonson accents *constitúte* and *liquefý* on the last syllable.* Milton, in *Il Penseroso*, rhymes *throne* and *contemplation*; in the Hymn on the Nativity, *began* and *ocean*, *alone* and *union*, *session* and *throne*, *unsufferable* and *council-table*, *stable* and *serviceable*,† and in the *Passion*, *tears* and *characters*. So in *Paradise Lost*, he accents *advérsé*, *aspéct*, *convérse*, *accéss*, *procéss*, *impúlse*, *prétext*, *surfáce*, *contrite*, *product*, *prescript*, and, even when employed as nouns, *consult*, *insult*, *contést*. In trisyllables, *blasphemous*, *crystalline*, *triumphed*, *maritime*, *conflágrant*. Some of these, such as accenting *contemplation* and *session* on the final syllable, are doubtless mere poetic licenses; for Ben Jonson in his *English Grammar* says that nouns ending in *-tion* and *-sion*, are accented on the antepenultima, and he instances *condition* and *infusion*, both of which he treats as words of *four* syllables. But the great frequency of ultimate and penultimate accentuation, by Milton, of words in which the stress of voice is now thrown further back, shows that the pronunciation of the seventeenth more closely resembled that of the sixteenth and earlier centuries than of the nineteenth.

Landor, to whom I am indebted for some of my exemplifications from Milton, notices the superior poetic force of the Miltonic accentuation; and he cites *upróar* as being a finer and much more striking word than our modern *uproar*, a pronunciation which only serves to suggest a false etymology, *uproar* being not a compound of *up* and *roar*, but merely the English form of the cognate German *A u f r u h r*. Landor believes Wordsworth to have been instrumental in promoting the modern disposition to carry back the accent, but I think he overrates Wordsworth's influence in this respect. The tendency to this general change manifested itself a century before the time of that poet, nor have

* In Gill's *Phonographic Spelling*, *y* and *ies* final are made long, as, *destinj*, *victorjz*, *finalj*, *enemj*, *hevnj*, *ivorj*, *skurilitj*, *incivilitj*, *miserjz*, *komoditj*, which affords a strong presumption that these syllables received at least a distinct secondary accent.

† Puttenham (*Haslewood*, I., 87) says, "Sometimes it sounds better to say *rěvócáblě* than *rěvócáblē*, *rěcǒvěráblě* than *rěcǒvěráblē*." This shows that the accent in this termination was fluctuating, and that in *revocable*, it had not yet been carried farther back than the antepenult.

his writings ever become sufficiently popular to have awakened it, had it been dormant. The same critic mentions *áristocrat*, *cóncordance*, *cóntrary*, *índustry*, *inímical*, *cóntemperate*, *cónculcate*, *détail*, *Alexander*, *sónorous*, *súblunary*, *désultory*, *péremptory*, as words which have in very recent times transferred the accent to the initial syllable.* This list might have been very much enlarged, but the changes indicated by Landor have not all become established in this country, and some of them are to be regretted, because they tend to obscure the etymology and classical quantity of the words where they occur.

There are, on the other hand, cases where the change of accent has brought back a word to its proper form. A striking instance of this sort occurs in the word *hospítal*. This was formerly accented on the second syllable, *hospítal*, and in popular speech, and at last in writing, the initial *ho* was dropped and the word become *spítal*, and was so spelt both in poetry and prose. This accentuation has so disguised the word that Landor believes even Ben Jonson to have been ignorant of its etymology, though the passage he cites from Jonson by no means sustains the opinion. The strong accentuation which characterizes the English articulation makes us so sensible to that element of speech that we habitually conceive of it as a significant element of itself, and no mispronunciation of English by foreigners so effectually confounds us as the transposition of an accent. It has with us taken the place both of ancient quantity, and of the subtilty in the discrimination of the quality of vowels, which belongs to the cognate tongues. An anecdote current at our national metropolis will illustrate the importance which persons of nice ear habitually give to accentuation. There were, a few years since, two Senators from the Southwest, one of whom pronounced the name of the State they represented *Arkánsas*, the other *Arkansas*, both of them making the accented syllable so emphatic, as to leave the rest of the word almost inaudible. The accomplished officer who then presided in the Senate, in recognizing the Senators in question as they rose to speak, adopted their own accentuation, and always announced one of

* Smart, writing in 1836, observes, that the accent in *balcony* has shifted from the second to the first syllable, within twenty years. Rogers complained of this displacement of accent, and said, "cóntemperate is bad enough, but *bálcony* makes me sick."

them as "the Senator from Arkansas," the other as "the Senator from Arkánsas."

There are, indeed, examples of a transposition of the accent in the contrary direction. The Latin *disciple* is a case in point. It was formerly accented on the first syllable, *disciple*, and in conformity with this accentuation, it was sometimes spelt *disple*; but the instances of this character are too few to be considered as any thing but exceptions to the well-established general tendency of the English speech.

The inclination to throw back the accent, though less prevalent in this country, as I shall show hereafter, is carried to an extravagant length in England, and hence such distorted pronunciations as *diócesan Chry'sostom*, which are not only without any etymological foundation, but in a high degree unmelodious and unrhythmical.

The prosody of the Gothic languages, and of English more perhaps than any other, is much affected by the monosyllabic form of so many of our most important words. The short words in the Romance tongues are, not always, indeed, but very generally, particles or other words usually not emphatic, whereas, in English, monosyllables, especially if of Saxon origin, are very often the most emphatic words in a period. Besides this, the majority of our monosyllables end with a consonant, often with two, and as the following word in most cases begins with a consonant, monosyllabic words generally have, in spite of our insensibility to mere quantity, if not a technical prosodical length, at least an environment of consonantal sounds, which makes them rhythmically long in comparison with the unaccented syllables of longer words, and of course unfits them for elements of the dactylic measures.

The frequency of double and triple rhymes in the works of Sidney and other admirers of Italian and Spanish poetry, contrasts remarkably with their comparative rarity in their contemporary, Spenser, who, though influenced by romantic models in the plan of his story, followed native English precedents, or forms long naturalized, in the structure of his verse. While Spenser very generally uses monosyllabic consonances, we find in Sidney such rhymes as, *signify, dignify*; *mutable, suitable*; *notability, possibility*; *carefulness, warefulness*; *delightfulness, rightful-*

ness, sightfulness, spitefulness; disdainfulness, painfulness; besides many compound ones, as hideoaway, bideoaway; pleasure doth, treasure doth; number not, cumber not; framed is, blamed is; and even among the few poetic licenses of Chaucer, we find this couplet in the Sompnoures Tale:

Refreshed more than in an hundred *places*,
Sike lay the husbond man whos that the *place is*.*

The resuscitation of polysyllabic rhyme and its more frequent introduction into serious poetry, are partly the effect of our satiety with the endless repetition of particular monosyllabic rhymes into which English poetry had run, and a consequent craving for novelty in sound, and partly to the attempts at a more strict conformity of translations to their original, which is a natural result of our increasing familiarity with foreign literatures. To say nothing of the almost exclusive employment of double rhymes in Italian, it will be remembered that in French poetry, the use of couplets with rhymes ending alternately monosyllabically and with the mute *e*, or what are called masculine and feminine rhymes, is obligatory; and many German writers, not only needlessly, but very unwisely, as I think, have imposed upon themselves the same inconvenient rule. In making English versions of poems in those languages where the metre of the original is retained, translators often endeavor to follow the rhymes of the text also, and the pedantic exactness with which this rule is adhered to, so far from producing an exact conformity, very often leads to a much wider disparity than would follow from the use of monosyllabic rhymes alone. The French mute or feminine *e*, which in poetry nearly corresponds to the German *e* final, scarcely has an equivalent in English orthoepý. Our short unaccented *y* final

* Gower has some singularly constructed double rhymes, which serve to prove that the *e* final of words now monosyllabic was articulated in his time. On p. 282, Vol. I., Paul's edition, is this couplet:

To speke a goodly word *unto me*,
For all the gold that is in *Rome*.

And, p. 870:

So woll I nought, that any *time*
Be lost of that thou hast do *byme*, (by me.)

There are several similar examples in Hoccleve. In *La male Regie*, he rhymes *hys me* with *tyme*, and *ny me* (nigh me) with *pryme*, *tyme*, and *oryme*.

is much more distinctly articulated, and the English sounds nearest to it are those of the common pronunciation of *a* final and unaccented in such words as *America*, *China*, and the terminal *er* in *father*, and the like, where our very inaudible utterance of the *r* leaves almost nothing for the ear but the obscure vowel sound preceding it, which is closely analogous in quality, and very nearly equal in prosodical quantity, to the French and German *e* final. But these sounds are of so rare occurrence in English, that they by no means answer the demands of the translator, and he accordingly resorts to our antiquated verbal forms in *-est* or *-eth*, as *lovest*, *loveth*, and to the participial form in *-ing*, as *loving*. These syllabic augments are very far from being the prosodical equivalents of the syllables they are forced to stand for, and in fact do less truly represent those syllables than a monosyllabic rhyme, with the usual pause, would do. To exemplify: In Goethe's magnificent Archangelic Trio in the Prologue to *Faust*, the alternate double rhymes are all in the unaccented *e* final, except in two instances, where the liquid *n*, which is almost as soft as the *e* alone, is made the termination. Yet in the best English translation, that of Mr. Brooks, these double rhymes are uniformly represented by active participles in *-ing*, except in one instance, where the translator finds a double rhyme in *ocean*, *motion*, and another where he employs the old third person singular of the verbs *lendeth*, *comprehendeth*. The poem in question contains twenty-eight lines, ten of which end in *e* obscure, four in the liquid *n*. In Mr. Brooks's translation, otherwise admirable, ten of the corresponding lines of the version terminate with the active participle in *-ing*, one of the most unmelodious sounds of the language, and the *Weise Reise*, *Stärke Werke*, *schnelle Helle*, of the original, where the final vowel constitutes the entire syllable, (the consonants belonging to the first syllable,) are represented in English by *sounding rounding*, *lending comprehending*, *fleeting alternating*, that is, syllables quantitatively short by syllables quantitatively long, which is in my judgment a wider departure from the prosody of the original than the employment of monosyllabic rhymes, with the inevitable pause after them, would have been.*

* Although accent is the only recognized formal law of modern measure, yet, even independently of the arrangement of vowels and consonants which

The Latins used trochees for spondees at the end of hexameters, the pause at the close of the measure serving to lengthen the short final syllable; but they apparently preferred not to employ trochees ending in a vowel, unless the sense required or permitted a formal suspension of the voice; and it will be found that most of the trochaic terminations of the Latin hexameters end in a consonant, or with a logical interruption in the syntax. The Greeks practised the same reserve, and helped the short vowel when practicable by the *ν ἐφελκυστικόν*.

The unpleasant effect of the use of our few inflectional double rhymes is remarkably shown in Tennyson's *Claribel*, a poem of twenty-one lines, thirteen of which end in the old third person singular present indicative of the verb; as *lieth, sigheth, boometh, hummeth, cometh*, and so forth. This, of course, is not accidental, and habit makes this repetition of the lisping *th* tolerable to us; but what would be its effect on French or Italian ears, and what sounds would the unfortunate foreigner produce who should attempt to read the poem aloud?*

That double rhymes will continue to be freely used in serious as well as in lighter English poetry, there is no doubt; but, as we have few graceful and effective polysyllabic endings in words of Saxon etymology, the versifier will generally be forced to seek them in the Roman and Romance element of our speech, and thus the frequency of double rhymes tends to increase the proportion of Latin words in our poetic dialect. This is certainly a very serious evil, as it involves a sacrifice of purity of diction, and of a genuine native vocabulary, to a morbidly fastidious ear, and a taste perverted if not depraved by the study of foreign models.†

determines the melodious quality of verse, we cannot, with impunity, absolutely disregard the temporal quantity of words and their elements. Such words as *strength, shriek, writhes*, or even such syllables as our participial terminations in *-ing*, are not by nature, and cannot be made by art—unless by the vulgar suppression of the final *g*, as *goin, bein*, etc.—the prosodical equivalents of endings formed by the obscure sound of the vowels with liquids, as in the last syllables of *bridle, father, stiffen*.

* Mrs. Browning's poem, *To L. E. L.*, referring to her monody on Mrs. Hemans, well illustrates the connection between double rhymes and inflectional endings. That poem contains thirty-two lines. All the rhymes are inflectional but one pair, and eighteen of them are participial endings in *-ing*.

† Puttenham (*Haslewood*, I., 67) is severe upon Gower for helping himself to French rhymes when English would not serve his turn:

Poetry, by conforming foreign words to the native accentuation, has made some amends for the mischief it has done to the language by employing aliens as substitutes for worthier aboriginals. It may render a yet greater service by restoring graceful and melodious endings which a too powerful Gallic influence has sacrificed. The existing want of double rhymes might be in part supplied by the revival of the Saxon inflections, many of which continued to be employed down to the time of Spenser. Why should we confine ourselves exclusively to our offensive ringing participial ending, and not rather say, sometimes at least, *shinand*, *glitterand*, *singand*, for shining, glittering, singing? And

“For a licentious maker is, in truth, but a bungler, and not a Poet. Such men were, in effect, the most part of all your old rimers, and specially Gower, who, to make up his rime, would, for the most part, write his terminant syllable with false orthographie, and many times not sticke to put in a plaine French word for an English; and so, by your leave, do many of our common rimers at this day.”

Many of the French words which first appear in Chaucer were introduced for the sake of the rhyme, and not unfrequently taken as they stood in the poems which he translated or paraphrased; but there is almost as great a predominance of French rhymes in his own original works. “The Squires Tale” has not been traced to any foreign source, and is believed to be of Chaucer’s own invention, but of the six hundred and twenty-two lines of which that fragment consists, one hundred and eighty-seven end with Romance words, though the proportion of Anglo-Saxon words in the poem is more than ninety per cent.

Mrs. Browning’s “Cry of the Children” contains one hundred and sixty verses, with alternate double and single rhymes, and, of course, there are forty pairs of double rhymes, or eighty double-rhymed words. The proportion of Romance words in the whole poem is but eight per cent.; but, of the eighty double-rhymed terminals, twenty-four, or thirty per cent., are Romance, so that nearly one-fourth of the one hundred Romance words introduced into the poem, are found in the double rhymes; while, of the eighty single-rhymed terminals, seventy are certainly Anglo-Saxon, and of the remaining ten, three or four are probably so.

In the “Dead Pan,” there are about one hundred double-rhymed endings, less than one-half of which are Anglo-Saxon; and, in the “Lost Bower,” out of about one hundred and fifty double rhymes, more than one-third are Romance.

I have made this examination of Mrs. Browning’s works, not as a criticism upon the diction of one of the very first English poets of this age, the first female poet of any age, but to show that even in the style of a great artist, of one who, by preference, employs native words wherever it is possible, a conformity to the rules of continental versification inevitably involves the introduction of an undue proportion of Romance words.

why should we not now employ the old infinitive and plural in *-en*, as in these lines of Chaucer :

For lack of answer, non of us shul *dien*,
Al had ye seen a thing with bothe youre *eyen*.

Ye *shullen* rather swiche a thing *espien*
Than I, and wher me beste were to *allien*.

With hertly will they *sworen* and *assenien*
To all this thing, ther saide not o wight nay :
Beseching him of grace, or that they *wenten*,
That he would *granten* hem a certain day.

It is remarkable that Thomson, who employs archaic words and forms with such singularly happy effect in the *Castle of Indolence*, did not avail himself of this plural to vary his rhymes ; but in the whole of that most exquisite poem, there does not, I believe, occur a single polysyllabic rhyme, unless the coupling of *lowers* and *powers* with *hours* be so considered. These remarks apply with equal force to Shenstone's *Schoolmistress*, which owes much of its attraction to its archaisms. The only approach to a double rhyme in the whole poem is in the use of the same consonances as those cited from the *Castle of Indolence*. It is still more extraordinary that Spenser, with his boldness in the employment of antiquated and abnormal inflections, should so seldom have resorted to a form of so great metrical convenience, and at the same time so melodious in articulation, as this old plural, the decay of which is perhaps the greatest loss that English has sustained in the mechanism of verse.

The English language cannot long supply the necessities of poetry without the introduction of new elements of verse. The ancient temporal metres were inexhaustible, because the permutations and combinations of the prosodical feet were infinite ; but when we establish the rule that in every couplet there shall be two words which resemble each other not only in prosodical or in accentual length, but in their vowel and consonantal elements also, we introduce into verse an ingredient, the supply of which is limited. There are, as was observed in the last lecture, thousands of good poetic words which have no rhymes, others which have at most but a single one ; and of the rhyming words, thousands again are unsuited to metrical purposes. Hence rhyme tends to

reduce our available poetical vocabulary to a much narrower list than that of other languages not more copious, but which have not adopted the fetters of rhyme. We must enlarge our stock by the revival of obsolete words and inflections from native sources, or by borrowing from the Romance languages; or again, we must introduce the substitutes to which I have before alluded, and which will form the subject of the next lecture.

LECTURE XXV.

ALLITERATION, LINE-RHYME, AND ASSONANCE.

THE interest which the study of native English, old and new, and of the sister dialects, now so generally excites, prompts the inquiry whether it is not possible to revive some of the forgotten characteristics of ancient Anglian poetry, and thus to aid the efforts of our literature to throw off or lighten the conventional shackles which classical and Romance authorities have imposed upon it. I propose to illustrate, by specimens original and imitative, the leading peculiarities of Anglo-Saxon and Old-Northern verse, as well as of one or two Romance metrical forms hitherto little if at all attempted in English, and to suggest experiment upon the introduction of some of them into English poetry. The only coincidences of sound known to English versification are, repetition of the same accentual feet in the same order, alliteration and terminal rhyme; but these by no means exhaust the list of possible consonances, or even of those employed by some branches of the Gothic family. The poetry of the Anglo-Saxons was always rhythmical, but not always metrical. In modern criticism, *rhythm* is often loosely used as synonymous with *metre*, but they are properly distinguished. Bede speaks of the poetry of his native land as characterized by rhythm, and he thus discriminates between rhythm and metre:

“It (rhythmus) is a modulated composition of words, not according to the laws of metre, but adapted in the number of its syllables to the judgment of the ear, as are the verses of our vulgar (or native) poets.”

“Metre is an artificial rule with modulation; rhythmus is the modulation without the rule. For the most part you find, by a sort of chance, some rule in rhythm; yet this is not from an artificial government, of the syllables, but because the sound and mod-

ulation lead to it. The vulgar poets affect this rustically; the skilful attain it by their skill." *

Bede's definition of rhythm is not remarkable for clearness and precision. Indeed, it is difficult to define rhythm, for the same reason that it is difficult to describe a sound, and the embarrassment has been increased by the determination of critics to insist on finding rhythms where none exist. In all simply rhythmical poetry, there will occur lines which are, to all intents and purposes, mere prose, just as in metrical poetry we now and then meet lines which, by poetic license, violate the established canons of metre. In a general way, we may say that accent is to rhythm what the foot is to metre, and we may illustrate the prosodical value of the accent by comparing a rhythmical verse to a musical measure, where the number of *accents* is constant, though that of the *notes* is variable, just as is that of the syllables in rhythmical poetry. The only difference is that the laws of music are more strictly observed than those of rhythm, in which latter there is great license both as to the number and the position of the accents.

Metre may be defined to be a succession of poetical feet arranged in regular order, according to certain types recognized as standards, in verses of a determinate length.

The following lines, from the *Primus Passus* of *Piers Ploughman's Vision*, are rhythmical but not metrical, and they conform to the Saxon models in all respects, except that the short, or unaccented, syllables are generally more numerous than in Anglo-Saxon verse, the particles being often omitted in the poetry of that nation :

What this mountaigne hymeneth,
 And the merke dale,
 And the feld ful of folk,
 I shal yow faire shewe.
 A lovely lady of leere,
 In lynnyn y-clothed,
 Came down from a castel
 And called me faire,
 And seide, "Sone, slepestow ?
 Sestow this peple,
 How bisie thet ben
 Alle aboute the maze ?

* Sharon Turner, *Hist. Ang. Sax.*, B. ix., chap. 1.

The mooste parte of this peple
 That passeth on this erthe,
 Have thei worship in this world,
 Thei wilne no better ;
 Of oother hevене than here
 Hold thei no tale."

Metre, therefore, was not an essential constituent of Anglo-Saxon verse, and the few instances of its occurrence are chiefly accidental coincidences, although a Saxon bard may occasionally have employed it designedly, just as a modern poet may confine himself to double rhymes, or introduce alliteration. Of rhymed poetry there are a few examples, as well as of what is called line-rhyme, but, in general, like endings seem to have been avoided rather than sought for. An English ear, then, would recognize in Anglo-Saxon verse none of the *formal* characteristics of poetry, and it would strike a modern hearer as merely an unmeasured and irregular recitative.

The most prominent formal feature of Anglo-Saxon versification is its regular alliteration; and, with certain exceptions and licenses not necessary to be noticed at present, this was an indispensable characteristic of the poetry of that language, as well as generally of the Old-Northern or Icelandic.

It was also much employed in Old-English, but whether its use was confined to certain districts or local dialects, or what were the circumstances that determined its application, is not, I believe, yet ascertained. The *Ormulum*, which is not alliterative, has been supposed to have been written by a native of the North of England, because its dialect is marked by Scandinavianisms probably derived from the Danish population of the border counties, and we should therefore expect that its versification, as well as its diction, would exhibit traces of the influence of Scandinavian models; but of this there are no indications. There is also a passage in Chaucer, now a regular stock quotation in all essays on this subject, which seems to show that the bards of other English counties, most remote from the Danish colonies, did not employ alliteration or even rhyme. The narrator in the Prologue to the *Persones Tale*, says :

But trusteth well, I am a *sothern* man,
 I cannot geste, *rom, ram, ruf*, by my letter,
 And, God wote, *rime* hold I but litte better.

There are many passages in other early English writers, which point to a marked difference between the poetic forms of Northern and Southern England ; and the general inference would be, that the versification of the South conformed to classical and Romance, that of the North to Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian models. I do not discover sufficient evidence that, at any time after Norman English was recognized as an independent speech distinct from both its sources, alliteration was generally regarded as a regular and obligatory constituent of English verse, though it was freely employed as an ornament by individual writers in the fourteenth, and even fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. However this may be, metre and rhyme, perhaps as much from the splendid success of Chaucer as from any other cause, became established characteristics of versification before the commencement of the fifteenth century ; and *Piers Ploughman* is the last work of any real importance in English literary history, which follows the original type of Anglican verse.

The rule which governed the employment of alliteration, stated in its most general form, and without specifying the exceptions and qualifications that under different circumstances attended it, is, that in each couplet three emphatic words, (or, by poetic license, accented *syllables*,) two in the first line, and one in the second, must commence with the same consonant, or with vowels, in which latter case the initial letters might be, and generally were, different. The position of the alliterated words in the first line was arbitrary, and varied according to the convenience of the poet, but the alliteration in the second line should fall on the first emphatic word. Nevertheless, the lines were so short that the stress of voice would seldom fall on more than two syllables in either line, so that, in practice, the first of these syllables would almost necessarily be alliterated in the first line also.

The lines already quoted for another purpose from one of the interesting poems just referred to, *The Vision* and the *Creed of Piers Ploughman*, the former by Langland, one of the Reformers before the Reformation, and written probably soon after the middle of the fourteenth century, are alliterated according to these rules, as are also the following extracts, though with frequent departures from strict conformity to them :

91 Pilgrymes and palmeres
 Plighen hem togidere,
 For to seken seint Jame,
 And seintes at Rome.
 They wenten forth in hire wey,
 With many wise tales,
 And hadden leve to lyen
 Al hire lif after.

4908 Kynde wit wolde
 That each a wight wroghte,
 Or in delyng or in delvyng,
 Or travallyng in preieres;
 Contemplatif lif or actif lif
 Crist would thei wroghte.

4947 For murthereris are manye leches,
 Lord hem amende!
 They do men deye thorough hir drynkes,
 Er destynce it wolde.

5655 Thiike that God gyveth moost
 Leest good thei deleth;
 And moost un-kynde to the commune
 That moost catel weldeth.

6897 Any science under sonne,
 The seven artz and alle,
 But thei ben lerned for our Lordes love,
 Lost is all the tyme.

The following are examples of alliteration upon a vowel :

8597 And inobedient to ben vndernome
 Of any lif lyvyge.

8609 With sawit and with outwit
 Ymagynen and studie.

But though no longer entitled to rank as an organic element in English prosody, alliteration was often employed for two centuries later, not only by the inferior rhymesters to whom I have alluded, but by some of the brightest ornaments of English literature. Ascham, with all his contempt for rhyme, did not disdain alliteration, and his Elegy on John Whitney is full of it, though few of the verses go quite so far as this :

Therefore, my heart, cease sighes and sobbes, cease sorrowe's seede to sow.

Spenser uses it profusely, and sometimes with very happy effect, but not always judiciously. The following lines are from the *Faërie Queene* :

The knight was *nothing nice* where was *no need*.

But *dreful deadly black*, both leaf and bloom,
Fit to *adorn the dead* and *deck the dreary tomb*.

And *fills with flowers fair* *Flora's* painted lap.
I follow here the *footing of thy feet*.

He giveth *comfort to her courage cold*.

Now smiling smoothly like the *summer's day*.

Thy *mantle marred* wherein thou *maskedst late*.

The alliteration is even more marked in these lines from *Februarie* in the *Shepherds Calendar*, two of which have been already cited for another purpose :

But *home him hasted* with *furious heate*,
Increasing his *wrath with many a threate* ;
His harmefull hatchet he hent in hand ;

and in this, from *Mother Hubberds Tale* :

232 *Gay without good* is *good heart's greatest loathing*.

So, T. Heywood, very melodiously, in the *Hierarchie* :

To *vail the wants that wait* upon the *Muse*.

Sidney, on the other hand, seldom introduces alliteration. In the *Arcadia* he censures those those who "course a letter, as if they were bound to follow the method of a dictionarie"; and in the fifteenth sonnet in *Astrophel and Stella*, he treats it as an evidence of poverty of genius :

You that do *Dictionaries method* bring
Into you *rimes, running in rattling rows*,
* * * * *
You take *wrong wales* ; those *far-fet helps* be such
As do *bewray a want of inward touch*.

Shakespeare occasionally ridicules the use, or rather abuse, of alliteration. Thus, in a couplet in the prologue to the interlude

of *Pyramus and Thisbe in the Midsummer Night's Dream*, we have this example :

*Whereat with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
He bravely broached his boiling bloody breast.*

And in *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Holofernes* says : " I will something affect the letter, for it argues facility :

" *The praiseful princess pierced and pricked a pretty pleasing pricket.*"

Milton, and the classic school of poets generally, avoid alliteration altogether ; and so completely was it banished from English measures during most of the seventeenth century, that its former existence as an element of versification was forgotten. One of Waller's critical biographers says : " That way of using the same initial letters in a line, which throws the verse off more easily, as—

" *When man on many multiplied his kind,*

was first introduced by him ; as in this verse :

" *Oh, how I long my tender limbs to lay !*"

Dryden revived the use of alliteration, but there was long a certain fastidiousness with respect to its employment. It has, however, been gradually winning its way again to favor, and a great modern poet has not scrupled to write—

" *He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.*"

Alliteration was wholly unsuited to the metrical system of the ancients, which rejected all echoing of sound, and its accidental occurrence was regarded as a rhetorical blemish. But it, nevertheless, often passed unnoticed by ears keenly sensible only to the prosodical quantity and musical intonation of words, and examples of the frequent, though doubtless undesigned, repetition of an initial consonant in the same verse or period, occur in the most fastidious of the classic writers. Thus, Cicero, in *De Officiis*, has this phrase :

" *Sensim sine sensu ætas senescit ; **

* In the phrase quoted from Cicero, it is highly probable, as a friend suggests to me, that *sine sensu* is a gloss which has found its way into the

and minor critics, who, happily for scholars devoted to graver pursuits, can find leisure for the chase of such small deer, have collected many examples of the like kind in other great authors of ancient Greece and Rome.

Although specially characteristic of Gothic poetry, alliteration has been by no means confined to it.* It is employed by the Finlanders and by several of the Oriental nations, and after the revival of literature it found its way into the humorous Latin verses of the sixteenth century. The structure of Latin, in which particles and pronouns may often be omitted, facilitates alliteration, however distasteful to classic ears. There are many modern Latin poems in alliterative verse, and the best known of these, the *Pugna Porcorum*, or Battle of the Pigs, in which every word begins with the letter *p*, extends to several hundred verses.

Analogous to purely alliterative poems, or rather their converse, are what are called lipogrammatic compositions. In these, a particular letter or letters are excluded, and an ancient poetaster made himself notorious by a paraphrase of the entire Iliad, which rejected *alpha* or *a*, from the first book, *beta* or *b* from the second, and so of the rest. Lipogrammatism does not affect the rhythm or metre of verse, and so poor a conceit would not deserve to be noticed, had not distinguished authors occasionally

text. In the Tusc. Disp. Cicero quotes some remarkable instances of alliterative verse from early Roman poets. Thus, from Ennius :

Qui alteri exitium parat
Eum scire oportet sibi paratam pestem ut participet.

Tusc. Disp., II. 17.

From Accius :

Major mihi moles, majus miscendumst malum
Qui illius acerbum cor contundam et comprimam.

Impius hortatur me frater, ut meos malis miser
Mandarem natos.

Tusc. Disp., IV. 86.

* Alliteration was a regular characteristic of Icelandic verse, and it often appears to have been designedly introduced into prose. There is a long passage in alliterative prose in the Saga Olafs konungs hins helga, K. 60, and a still longer near the close of App. EE, to that Saga in Forn. Sög. V. The following is an extract from the former: * * * "kallaðu hann línan ok ðíllátan, hægan ok luggóðan, mildan ok mjúklyndan, vítran ok víngóðan, tryggvan ok trúlyndan, forsjálan ok fastorðan, gjöflan ok góðgjarnan, frægan ok fályndan, góðan ok glæpavaran, stjórnsaman ok stiltan vel, geyminn at guðs lögum ok góðra manna," &c.

practised it. Lope de Vega condescended to this trifling, by writing a novel in which the letters *a* and *l* were not employed. Yriarte was guilty of a similar folly, and there have been some later pieces in the same absurd style.

To us, who have no ear for quantitative prosody, alliteration, provided it does not obtrude itself as an affectation, is generally agreeable, and besides the sensuous pleasure it gives us, it has often, and in earlier stages of the Gothic dialects had still more frequently, a real significance. The inseparable particles used as prefixes were much less freely employed in those languages than in Greek and Latin, and the first syllable of words, which was also usually the accented one, generally contained the radical. Now, particular combinations of consonants are found to occur very frequently in vocables of the same primitive signification; and therefore, of a given number of words in any homogeneous language, beginning with the same consonant, or combination of consonants, the majority will probably be more or less nearly allied in sense; and consequently, alliteration, or the use of prominent words with the same initial consonants, is a means of giving increased energy to a proposition, by a repetition of the emphatic radicals which enter into it. The pith of the alliterative proverbs so common among the Gothic races often lay partly in this iteration of meaning; and a perception of the relation between cognate words, sometimes obscure, sometimes distinct, not unfrequently gives a keen pungency to idiomatic expressions. On the other hand, where from the changes of language, words originally allied have become distinguished or opposed in meaning, or where different words in a given proverb or phraseological combination are derived from linguistic sources which ascribe a different signification to initial consonants, the verbal contrast is much aided in effect by alliteration.

Not only do our English proverbs often derive much of their point from this element, but many of our most favorite and most frequently quoted poetical sentiments and similes owe their currency to the same source. Few lines in English poetry are oftener repeated than Campbell's—

Like angels' visits, few and far between.

This simile Campbell borrowed, unconsciously perhaps, from

an older author, and he ingeniously contrived at one blow to destroy the beauty of the thought, and yet make the verse immortal, by giving it a form that soothes the ear and runs glibly off the tongue. As is shown in Bartlett's Quotations, John Norris, about the close of the seventeenth century, had said—

Like angels' visits, short and bright,

and Blair, fifty years later, had improved the thought into—

Visits, like those of angels, short and far between.

The simile is here very beautiful and expressive. Campbell's version is a mere tautological repetition of the latter half of the thought. The adjective *few*, in the phrase "few and far between," of course refers to the number of visits, not of the visitors. If the visits are 'far between,' they must necessarily be 'few' with reference to any supposed period of time; and on the other hand, if they are 'few,' but yet continued, as seems implied, through the whole earthly life of humanity, they can be paid only at long intervals. 'Few' and 'far between' are, then, equivalent expressions, and the brevity of the visits, a circumstance very important to the completeness of the thought, is lost sight of by Campbell altogether. Yet Blair's exquisite simile is rarely quoted, while Campbell's feeble and diluted alliterative version of it is as hackneyed as the tritest proverb. So easily are we led by the ear.* It is fair to admit that the epithets are more fitly applicable to the "hours of bliss," which form the subject of the couplet—

What though my winged hours of bliss have been,
Like angels' visits, few and far between :

because 'few' applied to 'hours' may be supposed to indicate a short continuance of time, which it cannot do when referred to 'visits'; but to make the simile truly descriptive, the qualifications expressed must belong both to the thing compared and to that to which it is likened.

* Byron's objections to the octosyllabic verse have no better foundation than the alliteration in the phrase, "*fatal facility*," and many a shallow critic has condemned fine poetry in this beautiful metre, upon the strength of that unlucky expression.

Besides alliteration, some Gothic nations nearly allied to the Anglo-Saxon had its converse, namely, the *ending* of words or accented syllables with the same consonant or coalescing consonants, the vowels being different, as, for example, in the words *bad led, find band, sin run*. We have no name for this coincidence of sound, because it is not with us, or with any of the nations of Central or Southern Europe, a regular element of verse. It might very well be called *consonance*, but that word is already appropriated to express, generally, resemblance of sound, and, especially, *full rhyme* in both the *vowel* and the *consonants* which follow it. In Icelandic poetry, this imperfect rhyme is regularly employed, and by the critics of that literature, is called *skothending*, a word of obscure etymology, which we may conveniently translate by *half-rhyme*.

Although terminal rhyme is known to, and not unfrequently employed by, the Icelanders, their poetic consonance generally consists in what is called *line-rhyme*, in conjunction with an alliteration regulated as in Anglo-Saxon. In line-rhyme, the corresponding syllables occur, not at the end of successive lines, but in the *same line*. The rhymes are either of the character which I have described as *half-rhyme*, or like the perfect consonances of other languages, which latter form of rhyme the Icelanders call a *ðalhending*.

Line-rhyme is a constituent of all but the most ancient forms of Icelandic verse. Both line-rhyme and terminal rhyme occasionally occur in Anglo-Saxon poetry, though they are neither essential nor, in the remains of that literature which time has spared to us, frequent; but from the close general analogy between the languages and the poetry of the Anglo-Saxons and the Northmen, and the mutual relations between those nations, it is not improbable that the Anglo-Saxons may sometimes have employed both forms of line-rhyme in a regular way, as the Icelanders always continued to do.

The rule of construction of these consonances is, that in each line there shall be two accented syllables which either form a perfect rhyme with each other or have the same final consonant or consonants with different vowels. The general distribution of the perfect and imperfect rhymes is, that the half, or consonantal, rhyme shall occur in the first line of the couplet, the full rhyme

in the second. The first rhyming syllable may be at the beginning or in the middle of the verse; the second should fall on the penultimate. There are many metres in Icelandic verse, and some of them are discriminated only by logical, rhetorical, or grammatical distinctions. In the favorite metre, or what may be called the heroic, "that in which," as Snorri says, "most finished verse is composed." með þeima hætti er flest ort, þat er vandat er, the lines consist of three trochaic feet or their equivalents, and are arranged in strophes of eight verses. The following imitation exhibits the application of these rules to English verse :

*Softly now are sifting
Snows on landscape frozen.
Thickly fall the flakelets,
Feathery-light, together,
Shower of silver pouring,
Soundless, all around us,
Field and river folding
Fair in mantle rarest.*

*Clad in garment cloud-wrought—
Covered light above her,—
Calm in cooling slumbers
Cradled, Earth hath laid her,
So to rest in silence,
Safe from heats that chafe her,
Till her troubled pulses
Truer beat, and fewer.*

*Every throb is over—
All to stillness fallen!
Flowers upon her forehead
Fling not yet, O Spring-time!
Still yet stay awhile, too,
Summer fair, thy coming!
Linger yet still longer,
Lest thou break her resting.*

Although the feet in which the line-rhymes occur are usually separated by intervening words, and arranged according to the rules just laid down, they are sometimes brought together at the beginning of the lines, as in the following verses :*

* The following is the example of this metre given by Snorri, Háttatal, 183 :—

Roll, O roll, forever !
 Rest not, lest thy wavelets,
 Shcen as shining crystal,
 Shrink and sink to darkness !
 Wend with winding border
 Wide aside still turning,
 Green o'ergrown with grasses,
 Gay as May with blossoms—

Toward yon towered castle,
 Time-and-rhyme-renowned.
 Lightly let thy waves then
 Leap the steepy ledges,
 Pour in purest silver
 Proudly, loudly over,
 Dancing down with laughter,
 Dashing, flashing onward,

Singing songs unending,
 Sweet, replete with gladness.
 Drape with dripping mosses
 Dell and fell o'erhanging ;
 Lave with living water
 Lowly growing sedges,
 Till thy toil-worn current
 Turneth, yearning, sea-ward.

In another of the very numerous forms of Icelandic poetry, the feet containing the full-rhyme are placed last in the verse, as in this imitation :*

Hilmir hjálma skúrir
 herðir sverði roðnu,
 hrjóta hvítir askar
 hrynja brynja spángir ;
 hnykkja hlakkar eldar
 harða svarðar landi,
 remma rimmu gloðir
 randa grand of jarli.

* Snorri, Háttatal, 185, gives, in the following hemistrophe, an example of the form imitated in the text :

A'ldrosar skýlr ísa
 ár flest megin bára sára ;
 kænn lætr hres á hrönnum
 hjálmvell jöfurr gella fella ;

In another variation still, in addition to the half-rhyme of the first line, there is a full rhyme in the third and fourth feet, thus :

Hræljóma fellr hrími, tími
 hár vex of gram sára ára,

Hear the torrent hurry !
 Headlong rashly dashing
 Down, in deafening thunder,
 Depths eye hath not fathomed !
 Mighty rocks uprooting,—
 Rudely shattering, scattering
 All its own bright silver
 Into shapeless vapor.

Stay, O flood, that fliest
 Fast toward night unsightly !
 Wait, ye waves, a little—
 Wisdom's speech would teach you !
 Light and life are sweeter,
 Lovelier far, than are the
 Cloud, the cold, the shadow
 Closing round the boundless !

Although line-rhyme might have been occasionally employed with advantage in Anglo-Saxon verse, as I think it may still be in some departments of English poetry, yet it is fortunate for the interests of our old literature that it did not assume all the fetters of Scandinavian prosody. The Old-Northern mythologic poems, as those of the elder Edda, are much simpler in their structure than those of the later Icelandic bards, and, like *Beowulf* and the poems ascribed to *Cædmon*, they are usually without line-rhyme, and often with but a single pair of alliterative syllables in the first verse of the couplet. In point of poetic excellence, the simplest measures generally rank highest, while the excessively intricate and artificial forms of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries have seldom any merit but that which belongs to the skilful execution of *nugæ difficiles*. A conformity to rules so difficult could be purchased only by the frequent sacrifice of the rhetorical beauties of poetry, and the heroic rhymes of the Icelanders are crowded with frigid conceits, and as inferior to the grand simplicity and the elevated inspiration of Anglo-Saxon poetry, as their narrative prose is superior to the comparatively barren, unphilosophical, and even puerile historical literature of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors.

There are also remarkable instances both of alliteration and of

frost nemr, of hlyn Hristar, Mistar
 herkaldan þróm skjaldar aldar.

line-rhyme where we should least expect to find them, namely, in the literature of Italy and Greece. Take as an example of half-rhyme a stanza of *ottava rima* in the twenty-third canto of the *Morgante Maggiore* of Pulci :

La casa cosa pareva bretta e brutta,
 Vinta dal vento ; e la natta e la notte
 Stilla le stelle, ch'a tetto era tutta.
 Del pane appena ne dette ta' dotte,
 Pere avea pure e qualche fratta frutta ;
 E svina e svena di botto una botte ;
 Poscia per pesci lasche prese a l' esca ;
 Ma il letto allotta a la frasca fù fresca.*

The following sonnet in the Pisan dialect, from a note to the works of Redi, abounds in full line-rhyme :

Similmente . gente . criatura .
 La portatura . pura . ed avenente .
 Faite plagente . mente per natura .
 Sicchen altura . cura . vola gente .

Callor parvente . nente . altra figura .
 Non a fattura . dura . certamente .
 Pero neente . sente . di ventura .
 Chissua pintura . seusa . no presente .

Tanto doblata . data . vè bellezza
 E addoressa . messa . con plagensa .
 Cogna chei pensa . senza . permirata .

Pero amata . fatta . vunnaltessa .
 Che la fermessa . dessa conoscensa .
 In sua sentensa . bensa . onorata .

* There is a very similar instance in the hundredth and hundred and first stanzas of the sixth canto of the *Malmantile Racquistato*. The editor, Puccio Lamoni (Paulo Minucci,) remarks on the word *bisticcio* in st. 101: E la figura che i Greci dicono *Parechesi*, ed è quando si dicono due parole che hanno lo stesso, o poco differente suono, e diverso significato," and he refers to a canzone of Guittone d'Arrezzo, made up of "queste allusioni di parole," the conclusion of which is as follows :

Movi canzone adessa,
 E vanne a Rezzo ad essa,
 Da cui eo tegno ed o
 Se n' alcun ben mi do,
 E di, che presto so,
 Se vuol, di tornar so.

Other examples are stated in Bindo Bonichi, and Francesco da Barberino.

Mullach, in his *Grammatik der Griechischen Vulgarsprache*, cites several lines of alliterative line-rhyming Greek verse, from a hymn “by a Christian writer belonging to the school of the later Orphic poets,” but without any indication of the probable date of the composition, which, however, cannot be by any means recent. The following are the first five verses:

Χαῖρε κόρη χαρίεσσα, χαρητόκε, χάσμα τοκήων,
 παρθέν' ἡφημερίους οὐρανόις τε φίλη.
 Χαῖρε κόρη πάντων μέγα χάσματι χάσμα λαβοῦσα.
 χάσμα μεγασθενέων χάσμα τ' ἀφανροτέρων,
 Χαῖρε πόνων τε λύτερα, δόμων βύτειρά τ' ἀνάκτων.

The poem is referred to by Mullach for other purposes, and he makes no remarks upon the character of its versification. It is, however, like the Italian examples just cited, a mere *jeu d'esprit*, and there is not the slightest probability that the authors of any of them knew that they were introducing into their verses the characteristic features of a poetic literature so alien to that of Southern Europe as the songs of the Scandinavian bards. But they are the more interesting for that very reason, as instances of the spontaneous origination of similar poetic forms, in nations whose languages and whose literary culture have little or nothing in common.

Although half-rhyme may be said to be peculiar to Icelandic poetry, if indeed it did not exist in Anglo-Saxon, yet there are examples of the employment of both full and imperfect line-rhyme in modern English. The mere introduction of a full rhyme in the middle of a verse, as when Coleridge says:

And ice, *mast-high*, came floating *by*,

is not a case in point, for this is only writing in one line what properly should be counted two; but Byron's verse—

Lightly and *brighly* breaks away
 The morning from her mantle grey,

is a true specimen of line-rhyme, as is also Burns's line—

Her *look* was *like* the morning star;

look and *like* forming a half-rhyme. These and some of the many

other similar examples, are probably accidental, but there are cases where we must suppose the introduction of such coincidences of sound to be intentional, though they have certainly never been regarded as *regular* constituents of any form of English verse.*

In Longfellow's *Miles Standish*, containing about one thousand verses, there occur not less than forty instances of marked, as well as others of less conspicuous, line-rhyme. These may have been undesigned, but, with Mr. Longfellow's trained ear, and his familiarity with Old-Northern literature, I should rather suppose them purposely, or at least not unconsciously, introduced into such lines as the following :

Here in *front* you can see the very *dint* of the bullet ;

Long at the *window* he stood and wistfully gazed on the *landscape* ;

Washed with a cold gray *mist*, the vapory breath of the *east* wind,
Forest and meadow and *hill*, and the *steel*-blue rim of the ocean.

You are a *writer*, and I am a *fighter*, but here is a fellow
Who could both *writes* and *fight*, and in both was equally skilful.

Sudden and loud as the *sound* of a soldier *grounding* his musket.

In this last line, the alliteration is very observable, as also in the following :

Steady, *straightforward*, and *strong*, with irresistible logic.

Lying *silent* and *sad* in the afternoon *shadows* and *sunshine*.

Musing a *moment* before them, *Miles Standish* paused, as if doubtful.

I think the introduction of these consonances a very happy feature in Mr. Longfellow's hexameters, and believe that a still more liberal use of them, especially of the line-rhyme, would facilitate the naturalization of a measure not easily reconcilable with English orthoepy.

In spite of the excessive difficulty of the Icelandic versification,

* Among the verses prefixed to Sylvester's *Du Bartas*, 1611, there is a *pyramidal* piece, with the heading, *Lectoribus*, which concludes with a couplet, containing a quaint half-rhyme :

Not daring *meddle* with *APELLES TABLE*,
This have I *muddled*, as my *MVSE* was able.

and the limited number of perfect rhymes which the Old-Northern language affords, the bards of that nation seem to have been scarcely inferior to the modern Italians in facility of improvisation. The old sagas contain numerous examples of extemporaneous compositions, of elaborately complicated structure, but with a regular rhythmical flow; and, indeed, most of the verses quoted in the sagas are improvisations. This was rendered practicable only by almost unbounded freedom of syntactical arrangement, and the extent to which the Old-Northern poets avail themselves of this liberty, combined with the highly figurative style of their diction, renders the interpretation of their chants a matter of no small difficulty to modern readers.*

The use of half-rhymes in Scandinavian verse is neither an accident, nor the arbitrary adoption of a purely conventional form of poetical ornament, but it is a natural result of the Old-Northern system of inflections. In the Icelandic language, the strong inflections were prevalent in all classes of words which admit of declension or conjugation. The strong inflection consists, not uniformly, indeed, but usually, in varying words for case or tense, by changing the vowel of the radical syllable, leaving the consonants undisturbed; and hence every verb or noun varied by this method, produces in its inflection half-rhymes. Thus, in English, *bind* makes in the preterite, *bound*, *find found*, *run ran*, *sing sang*, and in the participle, *sung*; *spring*, *sprang*, *sprung*; *write*, *wrote*, and in older forms both *writ* and *wrote*. So in nouns we have singular *foot*, plural *feet*, *man* plural *men*.†

The frequent use of this mode of inflection could not fail to

* Haralds Harðráða Saga, chapter 108, contains a sort of trial of skill in improvisation, in which King Harald, þorgils, a disguised Norwegian warrior, and Þjóðólfr, an eminent skald, all took part. The poetry, indeed, is far from being of a high order, but the incident is interesting, on account of a criticism of the king upon the versification of Thiodolf, who had coupled *grö m* and *s k ö m m* as a line-rhyme, that is, a syllable ending in a single, with a syllable ending in a double consonant; too great a license for the nicety of an Old-Northern ear.

† In Icelandic, as in English, both forms of inflection exist, and are not infrequently employed in the same word, but the strong declension and conjugation are more prominent and marked in the articulation of the former, and the letter-change often extends to more than one syllable, thus: nom. sing. *harpari*, a harper, becomes *hörpurum* in the dative plural; nom. sing. masc. *aunarr*, other, *öðrum* in the dative singular.

draw the attention especially to the vowels, the seizing of which was essential to the comprehension of propositions where words so inflected occurred, and the ear would consequently be rendered more acutely sensible to vowel-sounds, and would ascribe to them a greater relative weight in orthoepy than belongs to them in other tongues, which, though the numerical proportions of their vowels and consonants may be the same as in the Gothic languages, are inflected by augmentation. Hence, the vowels might readily become metrical constituents of a character not less important than that which they possessed in the classic metres, and occupy as conspicuous a place in the prosody, as in the grammar of the language.

It was natural that an element of articulation, syntactically prominent, and just frequent enough in its occurrence to be agreeable and not wearisome, should have suggested itself as a convenient prosodical resource; and it is a proof of the general truth of the doctrine I have advanced concerning the natural relation between inflections and prosody, that the few inflectional vowel-changes of the Greeks, such as the temporal augment, or the substitution of a prosodically long for a prosodically short vowel, as η for ϵ , ω for o , should have fallen in with their metrical system, just as strong inflections did with that of the Scandinavian.

I spoke of half-rhyme as the *converse* of alliteration. The literature of the Spanish Peninsula presents us with the *reverse* of half-rhyme. I refer to *assonance*, an element of a much more subtle and ethereal character than any constituent of prosody which we have hitherto considered. Assonance consists in using the same vowel with different consonants. Thus, *nice* and *might*, *war* and *fall*, *mate* and *shape*, *feel* and *need*, are instances of assonance. This imperfect rhyme may be said to be peculiar to the versification of Spain and Portugal, though it has been employed in Germany by Frederick Schlegel in his tragedy, *Alarcos*, by Apel in his *Spectrebook*, and by others in translations from Calderon and other Spanish poets. The rule of assonance, disregarding certain exceptions not necessary here to be particularized, requires the repetition of the same vowels in the assonant words, from the last accented vowel inclusive. Thus, *man* and *hat*, *nation* and *traitor*, *penitent* and *reticence*, are assonant couples of words of one, two, and three syllables, respectively.

To an unpracticed ear assonance is scarcely perceptible, and it is the more obscure because it is generally introduced only in alternate verses, or the second of each couplet, the first lines of the successive couplets having neither rhyme nor any other correspondence of sound. In the following specimen, in order to render the assonance more conspicuous, it is employed in the first three lines of each stanza, the fourth being left blank, and it is made monosyllabic, instead of ending the line with a trochee as is usual in Spanish verse :

Let me choose, and I will *dwell*
Where the sea, with sounding *tread*
Climbeth, till his feathery *crest*
Brush the mountain's feet.

Let me choose, and on such *shore*
Will I plant my lowly *home*,
Where the unresting billows *roll*
Cliffs eternal near.

There, beneath transparent *skies*,
Where the vine and olive *thrives*,
Where the golden orange *smiles*—
Listening to the wave,

There how gladly would I *sleep*,
Ocean's music in mine *ear*,
Through the night of time, nor *feel*,
Weary till the day.*

* By way of more exactly illustrating the Spanish assonance, I give a translation of a few stanzas of a well-known Spanish ballad, in which the principal correspondence falls on the penultimate syllable of the verse :

Passing was the Moorish monarch
Through the city of Granada,
From the portal of Elvira
To the gate of Bivarambla.
Woe is me, Alhama !

Letters came to say, Alhama
By the Christians now was holden.
On the ground he flung the letters,
Slew the messenger that bore them.
Woe is me, Alhama !

Straightway from his mule alighting,
Then he leaps upon his charger,

In a former lecture, I noticed the large proportion of Romance words which Mrs. Browning employs in her double rhymes. Mrs. Browning always prefers the Saxon word where choice is possible, and I ascribe to this preference her employment of assonant or vowel-rhymes, to an extent that a more timid poet would scarcely venture upon.

Of about fifty couples of double rhymes in *The Dead Pan*, a dozen pair are assonants, as, *know from, snow-storm; honest, admonisht; silence, islands; glory, evermore thee; iron, inspiring*. In the *Mournful Mother* we find *show him, flowing; behold not, folded; glory, before thee; psalm now, palm bough*; and in the *Lost Bower*, *advances, branches; prized I, unadvised by; come there, summer; mine be, pine tree; for me, door-way*. These are not all Saxon words, it is true, but in most instances one, if not both, of the corresponding words is native, and the admission of assonance in these would render the ear more indulgent in rhymes of foreign extraction. The example of so high a poetic authority, in introducing assonance as a license, might well justify systematic experiment upon its regular employment.

German literature presents instances of what has been called *annomination*, a word certainly not very expressive of the character of the thing designated. Annomination consists in opposing to each other, at emphatic points in the verse or period, words of similar sound but different signification or use, as in this example from Tieck :

Wenn ich still die Augen lenke,
Auf die abendliche Stille,
Und nur denke dass ich denke,

Up the Zaccatin he gallops,
Comes in haste to the Alhambra,
Woe is me, Alhama !

Having entered the Alhambra,
On the instant gave he orders
That the trumpet should be sounded,
And the silver-throated cornets.
Woe is me, Alhama !

In the original, the same assonant vowel, *a*, is continued through the *entire* poem, but this, though very common, is not obligatory, and the vowel is varied in different stanzas of the translation.

Will nicht ruhen mir der Wille,
Bis ich sie in Ruhe senke.

Twilight *stillness* when I drink,
And myself am gazing *still*,
Thinking only that I *think*,
Then *will* never rest my *will*
Till to rest I bid it sink.

If the English lines happen to remind the reader of Pope's Verses by a Person of Quality, he may be assured that the insipidity is not the fault of the translator. Sidney has indulged, in this conceit, in what Landor calls the best of his poems, the eighth song in *Astrophel and Stella* :

Now be *still*, yet *still* believe me ;

and elsewhere he says :

A *plaining* song *plaine-singing* voyce requires.

Spenser, too, in the *Shepherds Calendar*, *Januarie*, has these couplets :

I love thilke *Lasse*, (*alas!* why do I love ?)
And am *forlorne*, (*alas!* why am I *lorne* ?)

And thou, unluckie *Muse*, that wontst to ease
My *musings* minde, yet canst not when thou should.

And in *Mother Hubberds Tale* :

Nor ordinance so needful, but that hee
Would *violate*, though not with *violence*.

A still better example occurs in the Author's *Induction to the Mirror for Magistrates*, Haslewood's edition I. 15 :

And *leaves* began to *leave* the shady tree.*

* Some of these examples remind us of a form of Icelandic verse, several varieties of which are described in the *Háttatal* of Snorri, under the name of *refhvörf*. Its peculiarity consists in the introduction of pairs of words opposite in meaning, such as hot, cold ; fire, water ; earth, air ; attack, defend, &c. In the most perfect examples, the words are alike in accent and number of syllables, and they should occur in the same line, but this, of course, would be practicable only to a very limited extent. Snorri gives a strophe of eight lines, composed wholly of such disparate couples, but in most of the varieties he describes, much greater license is allowed. *Háttatal*, c. 98-99.

Hardly to be distinguished from annomination is the *euphuism* of Queen Elizabeth's age, which Scott's character of Sir Percie Shafton has made familiar to modern readers. Scott has rather caricatured the style of Lilly, from whose principal work this peculiarity of expression derives its name, and Shafton is more euphuistic than Lilly, the great euphuist himself. Sir Philip Sidney uses it as frequently, perhaps, as any other writer. Such phrases as these are of constant occurrence in his prose works :

"Remembrance still forced our thoughts to worke upon this place where we *last* (alas that the word *last* should so long *last*!) did grace our eyes upon her ever flourishing beauty."

"Blessed be thou, Urania, the *sweetest fairness*, and the *fairest sweetness*."

Spenser seldom indulges in this fashion of his time, but has occasionally a euphuistic line, as these from the Shepheards Calendar :

With *mourning pyne* I; you with *pyning mourne*.

The sovereigne of *seas* he blames in vaine,
That, once *sea-beate*, will to *sea* againe.

The style of Fuller is marked by the frequent recurrence of euphuistic expressions, but the exuberance of wit and humor, which overflows even the gravest works of a writer, whose amazing affluence of thought and imagination makes him one of the most valuable as well as entertaining of our old authors, leads us often to suspect a smile under the fanciful rhetoric of his most serious exhortations.

It is to the comparative rarity of similar sounds, which in languages with terminal inflections are forced upon the ear to satiety, that we are to ascribe the love of every species of consonance, which at one time or another has marked the literature of all the nations of Northern Europe. The passion for alliteration and rhyme is common to the Germans, the Scandinavians, and the Anglican family, and the French are scarcely less fond than ourselves of puns, charades, and conundrums; while in Italy, where the inflections are much more numerous, no species of verbal wit is so much in vogue. The sermons of Abraham à Santa Clara are remarkable for their incessant use of alliteration, assonance, and consonance, and though of a later date than the events which

form the subject of Schiller's great drama, are said to have served as the model for the Capuchin sermon in Wallenstein's Lager, of which a very felicitous translation will be found in an early number of the *Foreign Review*.

The employment of imitative words, measures, and cadences, in poetry, naturally connects itself with the subject we are considering. The ancient writers present many supposed examples of this ornament and adjunct to expression, but our great ignorance of the pronunciation of the classic languages, especially the Greek, exposes us to much risk of error in pronouncing on the resemblance between the sound and the sense. I cannot discuss this branch of the subject on the present occasion, and I shall confine myself to the use of purely imitative *words*. The employment of these in modern literature has generally been restricted to popular and romantic poetry, and in this they have been introduced with great success. The best examples I can call to mind are Bürger's Lenore, and the very fine translation of it by Taylor. In neither of these is the imitation overcharged, or carried beyond what we might expect to hear in a simple, but spirited and picturesque oral narrative of the scenes described in the poem. The translation does not in all points come up to the felicity of the original, but in some passages it surpasses it. Thus :

She herde a knight with clank alight,
And climbe the stair with speed,

is very good, but

And soon she heard a tinkling hand
That twirled at the pin,

is quite inferior to the

Ganz lose, leise, klinglingling,

of the original, while

He cracked his whyppe ; the locks, the bolts,
Cling-clang asunder flew,

is not inferior to Bürger's very best lines. In fact, both poems are examples of remarkable skill in the use of mere sound as an accompaniment and intensive of sense. I know, however, in the

whole range of imitative verse, no line superior, perhaps I should say none equal, to that in Wild's celebrated nameless poem :

Yet as if grieving to efface
All vestige of the human race,
On that lone shore loud moans the sea.

Here the employment of monosyllables, of long vowels and of liquids, without harsh consonantal sounds, together with the significance of the words themselves, gives to the verse a force of expression seldom if ever surpassed.

The present literature of most European nations, certainly of the English and the Anglo-American people, exhibits abundant tokens of a satiety of hackneyed rhymes and stereotyped forms, and it is a question of much practical interest, how far it is possible to find available substitutes or equivalents for them. It is certainly desirable that some check should be put upon the propensity to rebel against all the restraints, and to overleap all the metrical canons of modern poetry, but it is impossible to determine beforehand whether the substitution of assonance and half-rhyme would be allowable or advantageous. We do not now readily seize so vague resemblances of sound, but it seems not improbable that our ear might be trained to perceive and enjoy them, and in our weariness of familiar forms, the experiment is certainly worth trying.

LECTURE XXVI.

SYNONYMS AND EUPHEMISMS.

WEBSTER'S definition of *synonym* is as follows: "A noun or other word having the same signification as another is its *synonym*. Two words containing the same idea are *synonyms*." If this be a true definition, the French *cheval* and the English *horse* are synonyms of each other, because the one has "the same signification" as the other. Again, the verb *to fear*, the noun *fear*, the adjectives *fearful* and *fearless*, and the adverb *fearfully* are synonyms, each of all the others, because they all "contain the same idea." The definition is manifestly erroneous in both its parts. *Cheval* and *horse* are reciprocally *translations*, not *synonyms*, of each other; and as to the other example I have cited, it is a violation of the established use of the word to apply the term *synonym* to words of different grammatical classes, for synonyms are necessarily convertible, which different parts of speech cannot be. *Synonym*, in the singular number, hardly admits of an independent definition, for the notion of synonymy implies *two* correlative words, and therefore, though there are *synonyms*, there is in strictness no such thing as a *synonym*, absolutely taken. Properly defined, synonyms are words of the same language and the same grammatical class, identical in meaning; or, more generally, synonyms are words of the same language which are the precise equivalents of each other. And if a definition of the word in the singular be insisted on, we may say that a noun or other part of speech, identical in meaning with another word of the same language and the same grammatical class, is the *synonym* of that word; or, less specifically, a *synonym* is a word identical in meaning with another word of the same language and the same grammatical class. But though this is the proper definition of *true* synonyms, it is by no means the ordinary use

of the term, which is generally applied to words not identical, but similar, in meaning. Both in popular literary acceptation, and as employed in special dictionaries of such words, synonyms are words sufficiently alike in general signification to be liable to be confounded, but yet so different in special definition as to require to be distinguished.

It has been denied that synonyms have any real existence in human speech, and critical writers have affirmed, that between two words of similar general signification some shade of difference in meaning is always discernible. Persons who think, and therefore speak, accurately, do indeed seldom use any two words in precisely the same sense, and with respect to words which do not admit of rigorously scientific definition as terms of art, and which are neither names of sensuous objects nor expressive of those primary ideas which are essential to, if not constitutive of, the moral and intellectual nature of man, it is almost equally true that no two persons use any one word in exactly the same signification. Every man's conception of the true meaning of words is modified, both in kind and in degree, by the idiosyncrasies of his mental constitution. Language, as a medium of thought and an instrument for the expression of thought, is subjective, not absolute. We mould words into conformity with the organization of our inner man; and though different persons might, under the same circumstances, use the same words, and even define them in the same terms, yet the ideas represented by those words are more or less differenced by the mental characters and conditions of those who employ them. Hence, with the exceptions already made, all determinations of coincidence in, and distinction between, the meanings of words, are approximate only, and there is always an uncertain quantity which cannot be eliminated.

Besides this inherent difficulty common to all languages, there is the further fact, that in tongues of considerable territorial extension, there are often local differences of usage; so that of two words of like meaning, one will be exclusively employed in one district, the other in another, to express precisely the same idea.

Again, the unpleasant effect of constant repetition often obliges both speakers and writers to employ different words for the same purpose.* For instance, in this course of lectures, I must, to

* With foreigners, the employment of words or phrases not precisely ex-

vary the phrase and avoid wearisome iteration of the same word, use *language, tongue, speech, words, dialect, idiom, discourse, vocabulary, nomenclature, phraseology*, often, indeed, in different acceptations, but frequently to convey the same thought. For the same reason, one word is often figuratively used as an equivalent of another very different in its proper signification. Thus the wealthy English man employs *gold*, the less affluent and commercial French man *silver*, and the still poorer old Roman *brass*, as synonyms of *money*.

There are, moreover, words not distinguishable in definition, but employed under different circumstances. Of this character are many words which occur only in the poetic dialect, and in the ambitious style of writing called 'sensation' prose. These in some languages, as in Icelandic for example, are so numerous as to make the poetic and the prose vocabularies very widely distinct. Of this class are *blade, brand, and falchion*, for *sword*; *dame, damsel, maiden*, for *woman or girl*; *steed, courser, charger*,

pressing the idea they wish to convey, often arises from the difficulty of calling up on the instant the exact formula they are in search of, and, consequently, they are forced to content themselves with some very inadequate equivalent. Many years since, a foreign lady, who had never before been in a country where English was vernacular, spent some days in my family immediately after her arrival in the United States. I found her English remarkably good, and complimented her ready command of the language. "Ah!" replied she, "you think I speak it well because I use it fluently and grammatically; but, after all, I assure you, I can never say in English *precisely what I mean*."

Another difficulty in expressing one's self correctly in a foreign tongue arises from the fact that a word or phrase derived from a common source and literally translatable into another speech, may convey, when so translated, a totally different idea from that intended. For instance, we say in English that a man is *housed* when he has a comfortable habitation, or, colloquially, when he is temporarily confined to the house. Were we to attempt to translate this idea literally into Italian or Spanish, and say that a man was *casato* or *casado*, we should convey a very different notion—namely, that he was *married*. In French the sense might be still different: *La plus belle rue que je croy qui soit en tout le monde, est la mieux maïsonnée*.—P. de Comines: chap. xviii., p. 1404.

Then again, a word may have become vulgar in one language while it retains its dignity in another, as for instance while we may still say *to ape*, with the Italian (*scimiettare*) we hesitate somewhat to follow him with *to hound, to dog*, (*accannare, accaneggiare*), both which words are freely used in Italy in the most refined conversation.

palfrey, for *horse*; and there are also, in most languages, many words peculiar to the sacred style or language of religion, but still having exact equivalents, the use of which is restricted to secular purposes. In general, words consecrated to religious and poetical uses, are either native terms, which in the speech of common life have been supplanted by alien ones, or they belong to foreign tongues, and have been introduced with foreign forms of poetical composition or with foreign religious instruction.

Nations much inclined to the figurative or metaphorical style, have usually numerous words synonymous in their use though etymologically of different signification. Thus, the Arabic has a large number of names for the lion, and not fewer for the sword. The figurative dialect of the Icelanders is also extremely rich. Snorro's Edda enumerates an hundred and fifty synonyms for 'sword,' and a proportionate number for almost every other object which could be important in the poetic vocabulary. In such a profuse nomenclature as that of the Arabic and the Icelandic, a large proportion of the words were originally descriptive epithets, drawn from some quality or use of the object to which they are applied, and at other times they are taken from some incident in the popular mythology of the countries where they are employed. Our own *brand*, which occurs also in Icelandic and Norman French poetry as a name of the sword, is probably from the root of to *burn*, and refers to the flaming appearance of a well-polished blade. Other names are derived from the cutting properties of the edge, from the form of the blade, from the metal of which it was forged, and so of all its material qualities. These, of course, once conveyed distinct meanings, but in many instances the etymology, though known to the learned, was popularly forgotten, and thus these different words came at last to be, in common use, exact equivalents the one of the other.

In composite languages like the English, there often occur words derived from different sources, which, though distinguished in use, are absolutely synonymous in meaning. For example, we have *globe* from the Latin, *sphere* from the Greek. The one is fairly translated by the other, and they are identical in signification, inasmuch as all that can be truly affirmed of the one is true also of the other; but they differ in use, and therefore we cannot always employ them interchangeably, *sphere* belonging rather to

scientific and poetical, *globe* to popular language. Allied to both these, and often confounded with, or substituted for them, is *orb*, from the Latin *orbis*. This word originally signified a circle, then a flat object limited by a circular boundary, and it was applied both to the fellys of wheels and to wheels cut out of solid timber without spokes, as they often are at this day in the East. Then it was transferred to the sun and moon, which present to the eye a plane surface bounded by a circle, or what we generally call a disc, from the Greek and Latin *discus*, a quoit, whence also possibly our word *dish*, and even the German *Tisch*, or table, from general resemblance of form. But when it was discovered that the sun and moon were not discs, but spheres, the word *orb* assumed the meaning of *globe*, and afterwards was extended in signification so as to embrace the hollow spheres of ancient astronomy. At present, though not susceptible of rigorously exact definition, *orb* is not distinguishable in sense from either globe or sphere, though its use is chiefly confined to poetical composition. We have, then, a group of three words, *sphere*, *globe*, *orb*, properly synonymous, and we may add to them the word *ball*, as differing from the others only in being more loosely employed.*

Out of difference of use with identity of signification grows what is called euphemism in language, or the substitution of refined or inoffensive words for gross or irritating ones, to convey precisely the same idea. It is difficult to understand how, of two words or phrases precisely alike in meaning, one may be freely used under circumstances where the employment of the other would be considered a flagrant violation of the laws of decorum; †

* It is remarkable that not one of these words belongs to the Gothic family of languages, and, in fact, we have borrowed almost all our terms precisely descriptive of *form* from Romance sources. *Round*, *square*, *circle*, *cube*, *angle*, *line*, *surface*, *curve*, all these are of Latin etymology, and our claim even to *straight* and *flat*, as native words, is matter of dispute. *Source* (from L. *urgens*, through O. F. *sorse*) and *spring* (from A. S. *springan*) are generally used as synonyms, though in some cases we should employ the one where we would not use the other. *A fertile source*, though a very common phrase, is certainly a false metaphor; *a fertile spring* is more picturesque, but, unhappily, it is equivocal.

† Plutarch (see Davanzati, vol. 1, Pref. xxxiii.) says that the people of Pallene would not use the cry *ἀνδρὲ λῶ!* after *Λεως* had betrayed them. The Sieneze said habitually *chello* (quello) for nine, from hatred to the tyrannical

but it is probably to be explained partly on the principle of association, which makes repulsive images doubly offensive, when they are suggested by words habitually employed by the vulgar and the vile, and strips them of half their grossness, when they are recalled by terms which have not yet been incorporated into the dialect of social debasement and of vice. The composite structure of English, giving us a double vocabulary, has supplied us with a larger stock of relatively euphemistic and vulgar expressions than most languages possess, and it will generally be found that the Latin and French elements have furnished the words which are least offensive, probably because they are least familiar, and to our ears least expressive. In the greater or less degree of that familiarity which, as the old proverb says, "breeds contempt," we find the true explanation of the different impression produced by vulgar and by euphemistic words of the same meaning. And it is for the same reason that coarseness of thought or of diction, in the literature of languages in which we are not entirely at home, is a less repulsive, and therefore, perhaps, a more dangerous source of corruption. The frequent and ostentatious use of euphemistic expressions, however disagreeable as an affectation—arising as often from a conscious grossness of mind only made more conspicuous by its awkward efforts to conceal itself, as from an honest fastidiousness—is, notwithstanding, less offensive than the contrary *vice* (for it deserves no milder name) of clothing the sacredest ideas, and communicating the most solemn facts, in the vocabulary of what, for want of a fitter word, we are obliged to designate as *slang*. Narrative and dramatic fiction have in our times gone great lengths in the employment of this dialect, and certain popular writers have unfortunately succeeded in making many words belonging to it almost classical, but there are few things more certainly fatal to habits both of propriety of speech and of delicacy and refinement of

magistracy of *Monte dei Nove*. Varchi, vol. 1, pp. 445-50, ed. Firenze 1845: According to the unhappy John Davidson, the people of Morocco, from some superstition, in addressing the Sultan always said 8+2 instead of 5. Many tribes of the American Indians coin a new name for an object, when a member of the tribe on whom the original name of that object has been bestowed happens to die; e. g., if a chief who has been surnamed "*The Bear*" dies, that animal henceforth receives a new appellation.

thought, than indulgence in so reprehensible a practice. True it is, the source of growth in language is in the people, but this source, unhappily, is not a "well of English undefiled," and though the popular mint yet strikes some coin of sterling gold, the majority of its issues are of a baser metal.

There is another large class of words which are used indifferently, not because they express precisely the same ideas, but because they do not express any clearly definable ideas at all. Such are most terms of abuse and vituperation, which generally serve rather to convey an impression of the speaker's moral status, than a distinct notion of the exact character and degree of depravity he imputes to the subject of his discourse.* This consideration suggests the duty, or at least the expediency, of extreme reserve in the use of words which give the hearer to understand, not that we have cause to believe the supposed offender to be guilty of any specific violation of the laws of God or man, but that we are ourselves in a frame of mind which almost necessarily involves some sacrifice of self-respect, some disregard of that charity which the obligations of both religion and society require us to show towards our fellow-man.

De Quincey has said, and Trench quotes and approves the passage, that "all languages tend to clear themselves of synonyms as intellectual culture advances—the superfluous words being taken up and appropriated by new shades and combinations of thought evolved in the progress of society." De Quincey is here speaking of words strictly synonymous, not of those generally called synonyms, but which are distinguishable both in meaning and in use. The remark might have been made more comprehensive, with equal truth, for there is a manifest inclination in modern languages to clear themselves not only of synonyms, but of all

* See Paul Louis Courier, *Seconde Lettre Particulière*. Il m'appelle *jacobin, révolutionnaire, plagiaire, voleur, empoisonneur, faussaire, pestiféré, ou pestifère, enragé, imposteur, calomniateur, libelliste, homme horrible, ordurier, grimacier, chiffonnier*. * * * Je vois ce qu'il veut dire; il entend que lui et moi sommes d'avis différent. And again elsewhere: Un homme vous accuse d'avoir tué père et mère, on sait ce que cela veut dire. C'est qu'il ne vous aime pas.

Vague terms of abuse, as *scoundrel, rascal, rogue, villain*, have no feminine form or applicability. The derogatory epithets bestowed on women are specific.

superfluous niceties of expression, and to this tendency we may in part ascribe the rejection of inflections in grammar, in cases where the meaning is sufficiently plain without them.

There is an example of the rejection of a needless subtlety in the case of our affirmative particles, *yea* and *yes*, *nay* and *no*, which were formerly distinguished in use, as the two affirmatives still are in our sister-tongues, the Danish and Swedish. The distinction was that *yea* and *nay* were answers to questions framed in the *affirmative*; as, Will he go? *Yea*, or *Nay*. But if the question was framed in the *negative*, Will he *not* go? the answer was *Yes*, or *No*. In Danish and Swedish the distinction is limited to the affirmative particles, and the negative form shows no trace of it. Thus to the question Will he go? the affirmative answer is *Ja*? to the question Will he *not* go? the affirmative answer is *Jo*, while *Nei*, or in the Swedish orthography, *Nej*, is the negative answer to both.*

* Although there are traces of these distinctions in Anglo-Saxon, I find no evidence that they were observed in Mæso-Gothic, and they were certainly unknown in Old-Northern, though *modern* Icelandic has recently borrowed from the Danish the particle *jo*, (*jú*) as the affirmative answer to a negative question.

In Mæso-Gothic, there are two forms of the affirmative particle. In *Matthew*, v. 37, in the command, "But let your communication be, *Yea*, *yea*; *Nay*, *nay*"; *Ulphilas* has *Ja*, *ja*, *Ne*, *ne*: but in *Matth.* ix. 28, *Matth.* xi. 9, *John* xi. 27, and *Luke* vii. 26, where the query is in the affirmative form, and in *Mark* vii. 28, where the particle is intensive merely, no question preceding, *jai* is used. The only form of the negative particle *no* found in *Ulphilas* is *ne*, (*ni* and *nih*, signifying, *not*, *neither*, *nor*.) but in the existing remains of the Mæso-Gothic scriptures, but one case, *John* xviii. 25, occurs of a direct affirmative or negative reply to a negative question. The other passages of the Gospels which contain such forms, as, *Matth.* xviii. 25, and *John* viii. 10, are wanting.

In the Anglo-Saxon Gospels, *John* xxi. 15, 16, where the questions are put *affirmatively*, the answer is *gea*; in *Matth.* xvii. 25, to a *negative* question the answer is *gyse*. In *Luke* xii. 51, xiii. 5, to *affirmative* questions, the *negative* answer is *ne*; in *John* xxi. 5, and *Matth.* xiii. 29, the answer is *nese*; in *John* i. 21, and *John* xviii. 17, again *nic*. In *John* viii. 10, a *negative* question is answered *negatively* *ná*, in *John* ix. 9, *nese*: and in *Luke* xiii. 3, an *affirmative* question is answered *negatively*, *Ne*, *secge ic*, *na*, two forms being employed. In *Aelfric's* Homily on Pentecost day, (*Homilies* of *Aelfric* i. 816,) in the reply of *Sapphira*, quoted from *Acts* v. 8, *gea* is the *affirmative* answer to an *affirmative* question. In the Saxon chronicle, An. MLXVII., *Ingram's* edition, p. 267, *ia* (*gea*) is the reply to an earnestly repeated request.

These distinctions seem to be refinements belonging to the period when all the modern European languages showed a living *nisus formativus*, a tendency to the development of new and original forms. The etymological ground of this subtlety has not been satisfactorily made out, and though there is no doubt that it originally rested, if not on a logical, yet at least on a grammatical foundation, it had, at the earliest period to which we can trace it back, become a mere verbal nicety wholly independent of the point of view from which the question was regarded by the speaker, and therefore adding nothing to the force or clearness of expression. A subtlety like this, a distinction in words which suggests no difference of thought, was repugnant to the linguistic sense of an intellectual and at the same time practical people, and it therefore did not long survive the general diffusion of literary culture among the English nation. It may be doubted whether

In Alfred's Boethius, c. xvi. § iv., and in c. xxxiv. § vi. *gyse* is the *affirmative* answer to *negative* questions; and in six cases in c. xiv. § 1, xxiv. § 4, c. xxvi. § 1, c. xxvii. § 2, *nese*, the *negative* reply to *affirmative* questions; but in c. xxiv. § 4, *nese* answers *negatively* a question involving a *negative*. In Aelfric's Colloquium, Klipstein's Analecta, A.S.I. pp. 197, 198, and 208, we find *affirmative* questions *affirmatively* answered by *gea*, but on p. 199, *gea* is used for the same purpose with a question put *negatively*; and on p. 202, *nic* occurs as the negative reply to an affirmative question.

So far as these examples go, they, with a single exception, tend to prove that the distinction was made in the *affirmative* particle, but they show some vacillation in the use of the *negative*. I have examined Alfred's Orosius, the texts published by the Aelfric Society, all the poems in Grein's Bibliothek der Angelsächsischen Poesie, all the selections in Klipstein's Analecta, and many minor pieces, besides the volumes above referred to, without finding any other examples of the use of the particles as replies to direct questions, though there are many instances of the employment of both as intensives.

Further search might probably lead to more decisive results, but the difficulty of investigating such points, without verbal indexes to the authors consulted, justifies me in leaving the question to grammatical inquirers. It may here be observed, that the want of *complete* verbal indexes to our classic authors is a very serious inconvenience in English philology. Even Cruden often omits the minor words which, in purely grammatical questions, are as important as any. Mrs. Cowden Clarke's otherwise very valuable Concordance to Shakespeare is even more imperfect in this respect; for instance, she cites several passages where *sih* is used, but *since* is not a word of reference in the Concordance, which, therefore, does not furnish the means of ascertaining whether Shakespeare, like his contemporaries, distinguished between these forms.

Gil, who lived in Shakespeare's age, informs us that *soon* had lately acquired

modern scholars would have detected the former existence of this obsolete nicety, if it had not been revealed to us by Sir Thomas More's criticism upon Tyndale for neglecting it in his translation of the New Testament. That it was in truth too subtle a distinction for practice is shown by Sir Thomas More himself, for he misstates the rule when condemning Tyndale for the violation of it, and what is not less remarkable is the fact, that Horne Tooke, Latham, (Eng. Lang., 2d ed., p. 528,) and Trench, (Study of Words, 156,) have all referred to or quoted More's observations, without appearing to have noticed the discrepancy between the rule, as he states it, and his exemplification of it. The question is so curious in itself, and More's works are so rare in this country, that I shall be pardoned for quoting the whole passage relating to it. It will be found in "The Confutacyon of Tyndales Aunswere made anno 1532, by Syr Thomas More," page 448 of

a peculiar sense. "*Quikis citò, sūner citior aut citiūs, sūnest citissimus aut citissimè, nam sūn hodie apud plurimos significat ad primam vesperam, olim, citò.*" Log. Ang. 2d Ed. p. 84. *Soon* is not in Mrs. Clarke's Concordance, and therefore it does not help us in the inquiry, whether Shakespeare ever gave this meaning to that adverb. Is *soon*, in this sense, the same word, or of another etymology? Minshew, under *soone*, refers to *evening*. In the Romaunt of the Rose, v. 21-24, we find this passage :

Within my twentye year of age,
When that love taketh his corage
Of younge folke, I wente *soone*
To bed, as I was wont to doone.

Here *soon* evidently means *early*.

The following examples have been furnished me by a friend :

We'll have a posset for't *soon at night*.

Merry Wives of Windsor, I. 4.

Come to me *soon at night*.

Ibid., II. 2.

Soon at five o'clock.

Please you, I will meet you upon the mart.

Comedy of Errors, I. 2.

And *soon at supper time* I'll visit you.

Ibid., III. 2.

But as you make your *soon-at-night's* relation, &c.

B. JONSON, *David is an Ass*, I. 1.

In all these cases, *soon* has the same meaning as in that cited from Chaucer.

the collected edition of More's works printed in 1557. The text criticized is John i. 21, as translated by Tyndale, which More quotes as follows: "And thei asked him, what then, art thou Helias? And he sayd I am not. Arte thou a prophete? And he answered, No."

Upon this our author remarks :

"I woulde here note by the way, that Tyndal here trāslateth *no* for *nay*, for it is but a trifle and mistaking of ye Englishe worde; sauing that ye shoulde see yt he whych in two so plaine englishe wordes, and so comen as is *naye* and *no*, can not tell when he should take the tone and whē the tother, is not for trāslating into englishe a man very meete. For the use of these two wordes in aunswering a question is this. *No* aunswereth the question framed by the affirmative. As for ensample, if a manne should aske Tindall hymself: ys an heretike mete to translate holy scripture into englishe? Lo to thys question if he will aunswere trew englishe he must aunswere *naye* and not *no*. But and if the question be asked hym thus, lo; Is *not* an heretyque mete to translate holy scripture into Englishe? To thys questiō lo if he wil aūswere true englishe he must aūswere *no* and not *nay*. And a lyke difference is there betwene these two aduerbes *ye* and *yes*. For if the question be framed unto Tindall by the affirmative in thys fashion; If an heretique falsely translate the newe testament into englishe, to make hys false heresyeyes seeme ye worde of Godde, be hys books worthy to be burned? To this question asked in thys wyse yf he will aunswere true englishe he must aunswere *ye* and not *yes*. But nowe if the question be asked hym thus lo by the negative; If an heretike falsely translate the newe testament into Englishe, to make hys false heresyeyes seme the word of God, be *not* his bokes well worthy to be burned? To thys question in thys fashion framed: if he wyll aunswere trew englyshe he may not aunswere *ye*, but he must aunswere *yes*, and say, *yes* mary be they bothe the translation and the translation, and al that wyll holde wyth them."

The first question supposed is in the affirmative form; "Ys an heretike mete to translate holy scripture into Englishe?" and if Sir Thomas is right in answering it by *nay*, as he unquestionably is, then his first rule, "*No* aunswereth the question framed by the affirmative," is wrong. Tooke calls this "a ridiculous dis-

tion," and evidently supposes that it was an invention of Sir Thomas himself. Later writers, also, have doubted whether there is any ground for believing that such a rule ever existed. It is, however, certain that the distinction was made, and very generally observed, from the end of the fourteenth century to about the time of Tyndale and Sir Thomas More, soon after which it became obsolete.*

* *Yea* (y use) occurs in Layamon, (ii. 297,) in answer to a question affirmatively framed, but still in a form implying disbelief, and thus may be considered as following the rule. I believe *yea* and *no* are not found in that work, but *nay* is twice used as an intensive. In the Ormulum, I think there is no instance of a direct question with an answer by either particle. *Yea* and *nay* are the only forms given in Coleridge's Glossarial Index to the Literature of the thirteenth century, but I have not the means of consulting the authorities referred to. *Yea* is used by Robert of Gloucester, in answer to an affirmative question, and *nay* by him and Robert of Brunne, but I believe as an intensive only. I have not met with either *yes* or *no*, or indeed a proper case for the use of them, that is, a question put negatively and admitting a direct answer, in any English author earlier than Wycliffe and his contemporaries. In *Piers Ploughman*, *yea* and *nay* are found several times as answers to affirmative questions, and as intensives in other cases. *No* occurs in verse 8977 of the *Vision*, without a question preceding, and *yes* in verse 6750, under similar circumstances. *Yes* is used in verses 2721 and 11968, in both cases according to the rule; in verse 8776, as an intensive, in reply to a negative assertion; and in verse 2987, contrary to the rule, as an answer to a query put affirmatively.

Gower employs *yea* and *yes*, *nay* and *no*, almost indiscriminately, and of course without regard to the rule.

Wycliffe, according to the Oxford edition of 1850, in Matthew xvii. 25, uses *yea*, contrary to the rule, but the later text of the same passage has *yes* in conformity to it. In Romans iii. 29, in both texts, *yes* conforms to the rule. In James v. 12, Wycliffe has *yes*, the later version *yea*. In Matth. v. 37, ix. 28, xi. 9, xiii. 29, 51, xv. 27, xxi. 16, Luke xii. 57, John i. 21, xi. 27, xxi. 5, 15, 16, Acts v. 8, xxii. 27, Romans iii. 9, 28, *yea* and *nay* answer questions affirmatively framed. I believe *no* does not occur in the Wycliffite versions of the New Testament as an adverb, the answer to the negative question in John viii. 10 being "no man." In John ix. 9, *nay* is used in both texts, apparently as an answer to a negative question, but this is a doubtful case, for the particle may perhaps be regarded as a contradiction to the affirmative answer of "othere men." Hence it will be seen that though Wycliffe occasionally departs from the rule, the later, or Purvey's, text, with the doubtful exception just cited, uniformly adheres to it. In Chaucer, I find, upon a cursory examination, fifty instances of the occurrence of *yea*, *yes*, *nay*, and *no*, and in these there is but a single case of disregard of the rule. In this example, *nay* answers an affirmative question, and there are two or three cases where *yes* is employed as an intensive, generally, however, in reply to remarks involving a

Yes and *no* were usually, though not with absolute uniformity, limited to the office of answering a question negatively framed, while *yea* and *nay* served both as answers to affirmative questions, and as intensives in reply to remarks not made interrogatively.

As this idle refinement was passing away, there arose a real, substantial distinction between two particles, or rather between two forms of the same particle, which had previously been used indiscriminately in two different senses. Down to the middle of the sixteenth century, and indeed somewhat later, *sith*, *seththe*, *syth*, *sithe*, *sythe*, *sithen*, *sithan*, *sythan*, *sithence*, *since*, *syns*, and *sens* were indifferently employed, both in the signification of *seeing that*, *inasmuch as*, *considering*, and of *after* or *afterwards*. About that period good authors established a distinction between the forms, and used *sith* only as a logical word, an illative, while *sithence* and *since*, whether as prepositions or as adverbs, remained mere narrative words, confined to the signification of *time after*.

It is evident, that although the former of these notions is a

negative. In a like number of examples in Mallorye's *Morte d'Arthur*, Southey's reprint, I find the distinction made with equal uniformity, and the observance of the rule is very nearly constant in Lord Berners' *Arthur of Little Britain*, and in the Froissart of the same translator. It is in most cases followed in the works of Skelton, though in this latter writer's time, usage had begun to vacillate. I have examined many other authors with the like result, and think we may say that from the time of Chaucer to that of Tyndale, the distinction in question was as well established as any rule of English grammar whatever. See also Tyndale himself, *Supper of the Lord*, 1533, B. 1, 4a, *no* and *nay*, *yea* and *yes*.

Sir Thomas More's criticism on Tyndale was not universally acquiesced in, for Coverdale, whose translation was printed in 1535, Cranmer in 1539, the Geneva in 1557, and the Rhemish in 1582, as well as the authorized version in 1611, all have *No*, in the text John i. 21. Indeed, I think Sir Thomas himself was the last important author who followed the rule, though in the early part of his life, as is sufficiently shown by the works of Lord Berners, it was still in full vigor.

A curious form of *yes* occurs in Wycliffe, N. T., 2 Cor. i. 18: "Ther is not in it *is* and nay, but in it is *is*," [Gloss, *that is, treuthe*,] and verse 19: "Ther was not in him *is* and nay, but in hym *is* was," [Gloss, *that is, stedefast treuthe*.] In the later text, these passages read: "*is* and is not is not ther yne, but *is* is in it"; and, "ther was not in hym *is* and is not, but *is* was in hym." So in James, v. 12: "Forsothe be your word, *Is, is, Nay, nay*," &c. The Wycliffite translators, or at least Purvey, seem to have supposed that the affirmative particle was a form of the substantive verb.

derivative, the latter a primitive sense, they are nevertheless distinct, and it is very desirable to be able to discriminate between them by appropriate words. The radical is found in a great number of forms in Anglo-Saxon and the related languages, and in all of them has primarily the sense of *time after*. But the conclusion is always posterior to the reason, and *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* is the universal expression of all that the human intellect knows concerning the relation of cause and effect. Hence, it was very natural that a word implying historical sequence should acquire the sense of logical consequence. The discrimination between the two meanings, and the appropriation of a separate form to each, originated in the subtle, metaphysical turn of mind which characterized the fathers of the Reformation in England, nor have I, upon an examination of the works of numerous writers of earlier periods, been able to find *one* who clearly distinguishes the two senses by the use of different forms. Some authors employ for both purposes *sith* alone, some *sithen* or *sithence*, others *sens* or *syns*, and others, again, two or more of these modes of spelling. The fullest, most uniform, and most satisfactory exemplifications of the discrimination will be found in Spenser, who seldom neglects it, Sylvester the translator of Du Bartas, and Hooker. All these writers belong to the later half of the sixteenth century, immediately after which all the forms of the word except *since* went out of use, and of course the distinction, which seemed to have become well established, perished with them. The English Bible of 1611 generally employs *since* for both purposes, but it is a curious fact that in the book of Jeremiah both forms are used, and in every instance accurately discriminated. The disappearance of the double form and double sense of the word was very sudden, for though the distinction was observed, by writers as popular as any in the literature, down to the very end of the sixteenth century, yet in Minsheu's Guide into the Tongues, an English polyglot dictionary first published in 1616, *since* is the only form given for both senses, and *sythan* is simply referred to as "Old-English."*

* I have not cited Shakespeare as an authority for the distinction in question, because, for want of an entirely satisfactory text, I find it impossible to determine whether he constantly observed it or not. Mrs. Clarke's Concordance does not inform us what edition was made the basis of her labors, but as

In speaking of the introduction of the neuter possessive *its*, on a former occasion, I observed that in the embarrassment between the new word and the incongruous use of *his* as a neuter, many writers for a considerable period employed neither form. There was a similar state of things with regard to *sith* and *since* at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and there are important English authors who systematically avoid them both.

It is much to be regretted that later writers have disregarded a distinction logically so important. The restoration of *sith*, and with it of the distinction between *sith* and *since*, would be a substantial benefit to the English language, and I have little doubt that a popular writer who should revive it would find himself sustained by the good sense of the Anglican people.

Many of our particles, the conjunctions especially, are very equivocal in their signification, and we much need a new alternative and a new conjunctive. The particle *or* is said by grammarians to be used both as a conjunctive and as a disjunctive.*

she occasionally cites different texts, I presume all those consulted by her agree upon this particular point. The Concordance gives sixteen examples of the use of *sith*, in all cases as an illative, but *sithence* occurs in *All's Well that Ends Well*, i. 3, in the same sense, as, according to Knight's text, does *since*, also, in *Hamlet* v. 2, *Twelfth Night* v. 1, twice, *King Richard II.* ii. 1, twice, do. sc. 2, *Part I. K. Henry IV.* v. 5, and *Henry V.* i. 1. *Since* is used for *time after* in *Twelfth Night*, v. 1, twice in *All's Well that Ends Well*, iii. 7, in *Romeo and Juliet* i. 2, twice, and in *As You Like It*, v. 2. Many other examples of the use of *since* in both senses might be given; and therefore it would appear that while Shakespeare used *sith* only as an illative, he employed *since* indifferently to express sequence and consequence. Perhaps a critical examination of the first editions might determine the question, and I think it highly probable that the double use of *since* is chargeable to the editors or printers, not to the author.

* In modern English, *either*, used as a conjunction, is always a disjunctive, and is only *grammatically* distinguished from one of the senses of *or*; but in some early English writers, as, for example, in the Wycliffite school of translators, there are traces of a *logical* distinction between these particles. *Either* was very commonly employed to indicate difference, alternation, opposition, and *or* to mark identity of meaning. Thus, in both texts, Col. i. 20, "the thingis that ben in erthis, *ether* that ben in heuenes." In the numerous glosses of the older, or Wycliffe's version of the New Testament, *or* is employed as the sign of identity, or of likeness, as in v. 21 of the chapter just cited, "aliened, *or* maad straunge"; in v. 25, "mynistre, *or* seruaunt"; in v. 28, "the mysterie, *or* priuete." This distinction is not uniformly observed by Wycliffe, but still so generally as to show that he recognized it.

The double sense of this word, which may imply in one period that two objects or propositions are equivalent if not identical, in another, that they are unlike, diverse, incongruous, is a fertile source of equivocation in language, and it is very singular that the urgent want of two alternatives has not developed a new one, and restricted our uncertain *or* to a single meaning. The conjunction *and* is almost equally vague in signification. We find an exemplification of this in the case of "Stradling versus Stiles," where Pope, or Swift, or Arbuthnot, or perhaps all three, have illustrated the uncertainty of the law and of language by supposing a will, in which a testator, possessed of six black horses, six white horses and six pied, or black-*and*-white, horses, bequeathed to A B "all my black and white horses," and thereupon raising the question, whether the bequest carried the black horses, and the white horses, or the black-*and*-white horses only. The equivocation here does not, indeed, lie wholly in the conjunction; nevertheless, the use of a proper disjunctive particle, had such a one existed, would have prevented it.

The loss of the short-lived distinction between *sith* and *sithence* or *since*, is an exception to the general tendency of English, which is towards the discrimination of similar shades of thought in logical, metaphysical, argumentative, and æsthetical language, and to the rejection of needless subtleties in the designation of material things. In proportion as we multiply distinctions between intellectual functions and between moral states or their manifestations, and consequently multiply the words to express them, as we enlarge the nomenclature of criticism and subtilize the vocabulary of ethics and metaphysics, we incline to discard nice differences between terms properly belonging to material acts and objects, and to suffer words expressive of them to perish. An individual or a people earnestly occupied with serious studies, or other pursuits making large demands on the intellect, will habitually neglect the vocabulary of arts and occupations of a lower grade, and will disregard distinctions between the names of acts and things too trivial and insignificant to be susceptible of important differences. Few city counsellors, indeed, would now boast, with Lord Erskine, that they could not distinguish a field of lavender from a field of wheat:* but every man familiar

* Cobbett, Treatise on Cobbett's Corn, p. 1.

with country-life is aware that even farmers now confound in name many of the operations of rural economy, which were formerly distinguished by appropriate terms. The vocabulary of the field and the kitchen, except as it is enlarged by the introduction of new processes, new objects, and new subjects of thought and conversation, grows poor, as the dialect of the intellect and the conscience becomes more copious, comprehensive, and refined. I may exemplify what I mean by the word *fetch*, which, though still in use in England, is becoming less common in that country, and has grown almost wholly obsolete in many parts of the United States. *Fetch* properly includes the going in search of the object, and *go*, when used with it, is redundant, because it only expresses what *fetch* implies. *Fetch* is almost exactly equivalent to the German *holen*, and, as is said of the latter word, he can only *fetch* a thing who goes purposely after it. Now the distinction between *fetching* that which we go expressly to seek, and *bringing* that which we have at hand or procure incidentally, is comparatively unimportant, and may well be disregarded as a thing of inferior moment. Hence it is not often heard among us.* The distinction between *carrying* and *bringing* is more simple and obvious, and both words are accordingly retained, but there is a tendency to confound even these, and it is not improbable that one of them may go out of use.

Thus far the disappearance of words indicative of insignificant distinctions, and which only tend to burden the memory with useless lumber, is not an evil to be deplored, but there were in Anglo-Saxon and in the Scandinavian sister-tongues, numerous words expressive of slight differences of structure or outline in the features of natural scenery, the decay of which is a loss both to poetical imagery and to precision of geographical nomenclature, though their places have been more or less adequately supplied by new terms of foreign importation. Some of these words still exist as proper names of particular localities, though no longer current as common nouns. The admirers of Wordsworth will remember two of them, which occur more than once in his poems,

* We sometimes still say *to fetch* a sigh, and, in the slang dialect of auctioneers, a book or other article is said to have *fetched* such or such a price at such a sale.

as parts of local names, *gil* a rocky ravine, and *fors* or *force* a cascade or water-fall. It is a curious circumstance with regard to both of these words, that they are Old-Northern, and not met with in the extant remains of Anglo-Saxon literature, and hence they were probably applied to particular localities by the Danish invaders of England, and never understood as descriptive terms by the natives who adopted them.

The largest class of duplicates of common words which has become obsolete is perhaps that of the technical terms of the chase. In the days of feudal power and splendor, hawking and hunting constituted the favorite recreation of the higher classes, and the importance attached to these sports, both as healthful amusements and as a half-military training, naturally led to the cultivation and enlargement of the vocabulary belonging to their exercise. The early English press teemed with treatises on the chase, and the book of St. Albans, first printed in 1486, is very full on the subject of the nomenclature of the gentle craft. From this and other works on the same subject, we learn that the nobler beasts and fowls of chase took different names for every year of their lives, until full maturity, as domestic animals still do to some extent in this country, but more especially in England, and that all the important parts, products, and functions of each of these animals had its peculiar designation not common to the corresponding part or act of other quadrupeds or birds. The habits of different creatures, and all the operations of the chase connected with each, had terms exclusively appropriated to the species, and even the art of carving changed its name with the game upon which it was exercised. Thus Dame Juliana Berners, the reputed author of the book of St. Albans, informs us that in gentle speech it is said "the hauke *joukyth*, not *slepeth*; she *refourmeth* her *feders*, and not *pyckyth* her *feders*; she *rowsith*, and not *shaketh* herselfe; she *mantellyth*, and not *stretchyth*, when she *puttyth* her *legges* from her, one after a nother, and her *wynges* folowe her *legges*; and when she hath *mantylled* her and *bryngeth* both her *wynges* *togyder* over her backe; ye shall saye youre hawkye *warbellyth* her *wynges*." So, to designate companies, we must not use names of multitude promiscuously, but we are to say a *congregacyon* of people, a *hoost* of men, a *felyshyppe* of yomen, and a *bevy* of ladyes; we

must speak of a *herde* of dere, swannys, cranys, or wrenys, a *sege* of herons or bytourys, a *muster* of pecockes, a *watche* of nyghtyngales, a *flyghte* of doves, a *claterynge* of choughes, a *pryde* of lyons, a *slewothe* of beeres, a *gagle* of geys, a *skulke* of foxes, a *sculle* of frerys, a *pontificalitye* of prestys, and a *super-flyte* of nonnes, and so of other human and brute assemblages. In like manner, in dividing game at the table, the animals were not *carved*, but a dere was *broken*, a gose *reryd*, a chekyn *frussed*, a cony *unlaced*, a crane *dysplayed*, a curlewe *unioynted*, a quayle *wynggyd*, a swanne *lyfted*, a lambe *sholdered*, a heron *dysmembryd*, a pecocke *dysfygured*, a samon *chynyd*, a hadoke *sydyd*, a sole *loynyd* and a breme *splayed*. The characteristic habits, traces, and other physical peculiarities of animals were discriminated in the language of the chase with equal precision, and a strict observance of all these niceties of speech was more important as an indication of breeding, or in the words of Dame Juliana Berners, as a means of distinguishing "gentylmen from ungentylmen," than a rigorous conformity to the rules of grammar, or even to the moral law.

The old romances ascribe the invention of the vocabulary of the chase to the famous Sir Tristram of the Round Table, and the Morte d'Arthur says :

"Me semeth alle gentylmen that beren old armes oughte of ryght to honoure syre Trystram for the goodly termes that gentilmen have and use, and shalle to the daye of dome, that there by in a maner alle men of worship maye discover a gentylman fro a yoman, and from a yoman a vylayne. For he that gentyl is wylle drawe hym unto gentil tatches, and to folowe the custommes of noble gentylmen."

That most of these words pointed originally to a real difference between the objects or the processes indicated by them, there is little doubt ; but the etymology of many of them is lost, and those not now retained in different or in more general applications, have become wholly obsolete, though some which have disappeared from literature still exist in popular or provincial usage.

The study of synonyms has always been regarded as one of the most valuable of intellectual disciplines, independently of its great importance as a guide to the right practical use of words. The habit of thorough investigation into the meaning of words,

and of exact discrimination in the use of them, is indispensable to precision and accuracy of thought, and it is surprising how soon the process becomes spontaneous and almost mechanical and unconscious, so that one often finds himself making nice, and yet sound, distinctions between particular words which he is not aware that he has ever made the subject of critical analysis. The subtle intellect of the Greeks was alive to the importance of this study, and we not only observe just discrimination in the employment of language in their best writers, but we not unfrequently meet with discussions as to the precise signification of words, which show that their exact import had become a subject of thoughtful consideration before much attention had been bestowed upon grammatical forms. In a tongue in the main homogeneous and full of compounds and derivatives, the source of the word would naturally be first appealed to as the key to its interpretation. Etymology is still an indispensable auxiliary to the study of synonyms; but in a composite language like English, where the root-forms are inaccessible to the majority of those who use it, the primary signification of the radical does not operate as a conservative influence, as it did in Greece, by continually suggesting the meaning and thus keeping the derivative or compound true to its first vocation. Words with us incline to diverge from the radical meaning; and therefore etymology, though a very useful clew to the signification, is, at the same time, a very uncertain guide to the actual use, of words. And this is especially true of what may be called secondary derivatives, or words formed by derivation or composition from forms themselves derivative or compound, or borrowed from foreign sources. The study of words of this class is one of the most difficult points of our synonymy; and it is often a very puzzling question to decide why, for example, two substantives, allied in meaning, should be distinguished by one shade of signification, and the corresponding adjectives, which we have formed from them, by a totally different one. I objected to the latter part of Webster's definition of synonym, because, by applying that name to all words "containing the same idea," it makes different parts of speech synonyms, which is contrary to established usage. We have no term to designate words differing in etymology and in grammatical character, but otherwise agreeing in meaning; but to pairs of words

derived from the same root, and differenced in meaning only by grammatical class, we apply the epithet *conjugate*, or, more rarely, that of paronymous. Strictly speaking, the ideas expressed by the two must be identical; but, as they are more generally distinguished by some slight difference of meaning, the term *conjugate* is loosely used to express identity in etymology, with only general likeness of meaning, in words of different classes. *Cost* and *costly*, for example, are strictly conjugate; *faith* and *faithful*, in some of their senses, are exactly so, in others not; while *grief* and *grievous*, *polish* of manner and *politeness* of manner, *grace* and *gracious*, *pity* and *pitiful*, as ordinarily used, express quite different ideas. The verb to *affect* has a number of disparate uses in its different inflected forms and its derivatives. When it means to produce an effect upon, to influence, or to like, to have a partiality for, it has no conjugate noun; for *affection*, in neither sense, exactly corresponds to the verb. *Affect*, to simulate, to pretend, and *affectation*, are conjugate, although not generally considered so, because most persons are not aware that the unnatural airs, called affectation, are really founded in hypocrisy, or false assumption. The participles and participial adjective *affecting*, touching, or exciting to sympathy or sorrow, and the passive form *affected*, have still another meaning, in which the active verb is rarely employed.

Few languages are richer than English in approximate synonyms and conjugates; and it is much to be regretted that no competent scholar has yet devoted himself to the investigation of this branch of our philology. The little manual, edited by Archbishop Whately, containing scarcely more than four hundred words, is, so far as it goes, the most satisfactory treatise we have on the subject.* Crabbe's Synonyms, much used in this country, is valua-

* The Saxon part of our vocabulary, partly from the inherent character of the class of ideas for the embodiment of which it is chiefly employed, and partly because of its superior expressiveness, is generally very free from equivocation, and its distinctions of meaning are usually clearly marked. The number of Anglo-Saxon words approximate to each other in signification is small, and the distinction between those liable to be confounded is grammatical more frequently than logical. In the Treatise on Synonyms, edited by Whately, something more than four hundred and fifty words are examined and discriminated, and of these less than ninety are Anglo-Saxon. The relative proportions in Crabbe's much larger work are not widely different.

ble chiefly for its exemplifications; but the author's ignorance of etymology has led him into many errors;* and it cannot pretend to compare with the many excellent works on the synonymy of the German, French, Danish, and other European languages. But in the increasing interest which the study of English is exciting, this, as well as other branches of lexicography, will doubtless receive a degree of attention, which will contribute to give to the history of English a rank corresponding to the importance of that tongue, as one of the most powerful instruments of thought and action assigned by Providence to the service of man.

† Exempli gratia, *doze*, (allied to the Anglo-Saxon, *d w æ s*, and the Danish verb, *döse*.) we are informed, is a "variation from the French *dors*, and the Latin *dormio*, to *sleep*, which was anciently *dermio*, and comes from the Greek *δέρμα*, a *skin*, because people lay on *skins* when they *sleep*!" Crabbe, Syn. under *sleep*. With equal infelicity he derives *daub* from "*do* and *u b*, *über*, *over*, signifying literally to *do over* with anything unseemly."

It must, however, be admitted that, absurd as such derivations, and those already referred to in a former lecture as given by *Ménage*, appear, and as very many of them undoubtedly are, they are, after all, not more surprising than certain well-ascertained results of scientific etymology. What, for instance, can be, *primá facie*, more incredible than that the Greek *δαρν*, the French *larme*, and the English *tear*, are not merely related, but are only different forms of a single word. Yet no linguist doubts the identity of the three so different vocables.

LECTURE XXVII.

TRANSLATION.

THE study of synonymy, or the discrimination between vernacular words allied in signification, and that of etymology, or the comparison of derivative words with their primitives, naturally suggest the inquiry how far there is an exact correspondence of meaning between the native vocabulary and that of foreign tongues, or, in other words, whether a poem, a narrative, or a discussion, composed in one language can be precisely rendered into another. If we may trust the dictionaries, almost every English word has synonyms in the speech to which it belongs, and equivalents in every other; but a more critical study of language, as actually employed, teaches us, first, that true synonyms are everywhere of rare occurrence, and secondly that, with the exception of the names of material objects and of material acts, there is seldom a precise coincidence in meaning between any two words in different languages. Even the sensuous perceptions of men are not absolutely identical, but they nevertheless so far concur, that we may consider the names given in different countries to things cognizable by the senses as equivalent to each other, though the epithets by which the objects are characterized, and the qualities ascribed to them, may differ. But the moment we step out of the domain of the senses, and begin to apply to acts and objects belonging to the world of mind, names derived from the world of matter, we diverge from each other, and every nation forms a vocabulary suited to its own moral and intellectual character, its circumstances, habits, tastes, and opinions, but not precisely adapted to the expression of the conceptions, emotions, and passions of any other people. Hence the difficulty of making translations which are absolutely faithful re-productions of their originals.

There are at the present day conflicting influences in operation which tend, on the one hand, to individualize the languages of Europe and make them more idiomatic and discordant in structure, and on the other, to harmonize and assimilate them to each other; and the same influences are acting respectively as hindrances and as helps to the making of translations between them. To the latter, the helps, belong the increased facilities of communication, the general study, in every country, of the literature of several others, the influence of two or three cosmopolite languages, like English, French, and German, the extended cultivation of philological science, and the universality of the practice of translation, which has compelled scholars to find or fashion, in their own speech, equivalents, or at least exponents, of the idioms of all others. The Caledonian, indeed, does not believe that the novels of Scott can be adequately translated into any foreign tongue; the German affirms that Richter is to be understood and enjoyed only in the original Teutonic; and the American doubts whether the Libyan English of Uncle Tom's Cabin can be rendered into any other dialect. Nevertheless, each of these has had numerous translations whose success proves that they are tolerable representatives, if not exact counterparts, of their originals.

The opposing influence is the spirit of nationality and linguistic purism, which has revived so many dying, and purged and renovated so many decayed and corrupted, European languages within the last century. In almost every Continental country, foreign words and phrases have been expelled, and their places supplied by native derivatives, compounds, and constructions; obsolete words have been restored, vague and anomalous orthography conformed to etymology or to orthoepy, and thus both the outward dress and the essential spirit of each made more national and idiomatic, and, therefore, to some extent, more diverse from all others, and less capable of being adequately rendered into any of them. At the same time, the purification and reconstruction of languages have brought them all back to certain principles of universal, or rather of Indo-European, grammar common to all, and in each, the revival of forgotten words and idioms has so enlarged their vocabulary, and increased their compass and flexibility, that it is easier to find equivalents for foreign terms and constructions, than when their stock of words and variety of expres-

sion were more restricted. Upon the whole, then, better translations are now practicable than at any former period of literary history; and every popular author may hope to see his works repeated in many forms, none of which he need be ashamed to own as his offspring.

The question between the relative merits of free and literal translation, between paraphrastic liberty and servile fidelity, has been long discussed; but, like many other abstract questions, it depends for its answer upon ever-varying conditions, and there is no general formula to express its solution. The commentators on the famous Horatian precept:

Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus
Interpres,

might have saved themselves some trouble, if they had observed, what is plain from the context, that Horace was not speaking of translation at all, but of theatrical adaptation, dramatization, as we now say, of epic or historical subjects which had been already treated in narrative prose or verse by other writers; and, therefore, the opinion of the great Roman poet, were it otherwise binding, could not be cited as an authority on this question.*

* Much of modern opinion on ancient literature and philosophy is founded on the criticism of familiar quotations, the examination of detached passages, which, standing alone, appear to contain a very different meaning from that which they express when taken in connection with their context, or the circumstances under which they were uttered. An example of this is the sentiment in Cicero's Tusculan Questions, I. 17, so often quoted and moralized upon as an instance of excessive and almost idolatrous reverence for a majestic and imposing human intellect: "Errare mehercule malo cum Platone * * * quam cum istis vera sentire." Even in the *Guesses at Truth*, second series, third edition, p. 285, this passage is treated as the expression of a humiliating *general* submission to the authority of Plato, and Cicero is in part exonerated from the disgrace of so unworthy a sentiment, by the remark that he puts the words into the mouth of "the young man whom he is instructing," though it is admitted that he approved and adopted them. But it is plain to any one who will take the trouble to read enough of the dialogue in which this passage occurs, to understand the bearing of it upon the subject under discussion, that the "young man" expressed, and Cicero approved, no such deference to the authority of the Greek philosopher as is, upon the strength of this quotation, so often imputed to Cicero himself. The immediate point then under discussion was the question of the immortality of the soul, which was maintained by Plato, but denied by the Epicureans, and it is, evidently, solely with reference

The rule of Hooker: "Of translations, the better I acknowledge that, which cometh nearer to the very letter of the very original verity," is equivocal, because it is not certain, whether "original verity" means 'original *sense*,' which most would approve, or 'original *words*,' which most would condemn, for the reason that the idiomatic differences between different languages would often make a literal translation of the several words of a foreign author unintelligible nonsense. Fuller, with his usual quaint felicity, has well expressed the common loose theory by a simile. Speaking of Sandys, whose admirable scriptural paraphrases ought to be better known than they are, he says, "He was a servant, but no slave, to his subject; well knowing that a translator is a person [prisoner?] in free custody; custody, being bound to give the true sense of the author he translates; free, left at liberty to clothe it in his own expression."*

to the *conclusions* of Plato on this one point, not the general weight of his *authority*, that the disciple and his master agree in preferring to share with him the beneficent possible error of eternal life, rather than the fearful and pernicious truth, if it were a truth, of final annihilation, with his opponents.

And how comes it, that among the thousands of rhetorical critics, who, since Cicero and Quintilian, have speculated on the answer of Demosthenes, *ὑπόκρισις*, Delivery, Delivery, Delivery! so few have ever adverted to the opinion of Libanius, that this reply was an ironical side-thrust at Æschines; an opinion which, if we are to interpret Demosthenes by himself, is rendered highly probable by the contemptuous sneers of the great orator at the *ἀγαθή ὑπόκρισις* of his rival, the special point of excellence in which he was himself confessedly inferior to Æschines?

* Very judicious observations on the principles of translation will be found in Purvey's Prologue to his Translation of the Scriptures, (about A.D. 1388.) Wycliffite versions, I. 57. The general doctrine of Purvey is thus stated: "First it is to knowe, that the best translating is, out of Latyn into English, to translate aftir the sentence, and not oneli aftir the wordis, so that the sentence be as opin, either openere, in English as in Latyn, and go not fer fro the letre; and if the letter mai not be suid in the translating, let the sentence be ever hool and open, for the wordis owen to serue to the entent and sentence, and ellis the wordis ben superflu either false." Purvey exemplifies by many comparisons between the Latin and English idioms, which show a very good knowledge of the principles of English grammar.

A friend of Lodge, who signs W. K., expresses sound opinions on this subject, though not in the purest style, in a letter prefixed to the second edition of Lodge's Seneca, 1620. "You are his profitable Tutor," says he, "and have instructed him to walke and talke in perfect English. If his matter hold not

The rule often laid down, "that in translating a foreign work into English, we are to adopt the same style and diction which the author would have used had he been an Englishman," is mistaken or inapplicable, because, except in matters of naked fact or natural science, a foreigner, writing for foreigners, has a totally different set of ideas to express, and a totally different mode of conceiving similar ideas, from those which an Englishman writing on the same subject would have, and therefore he would have written a different book. Had Goethe and Richter been born and trained in England, the one could never have produced a *Wilhelm Meister* or a *Faust*, the other never a *Siebenkäs* or a *Quintus Fixlein*. Had Shakespeare been a Frenchman by birth and education, the world had never seen a *Hamlet* or a *Henry IV*.

The true result to be aimed at, where we propose any thing beyond the communication of bare fact, is to produce upon the mind of the English reader, so far as possible, the same impression which the original author produced upon the minds of those for whom he wrote. The rule I have just condemned does not lead to the accomplishment of this aim, but, so far as it is practicable at all, its effect is to translate the *author*, not his work, to give an imitation, not a copy of the original; whereas it is the characteristic of a perfect translation, that it, for the time, trans-

still the Roman characteristic, I should mistake him one of ours, he delivers his mind so significantly and fitly."

"That ye have not parrot-like spoken his owne words, and lost yourselfe literally in a Latine Echo, rendering him precisely verbatim, as if tied to his tongue; but retaining his Sence, have expressed his meaning in our proper English Elegancies and Phrase, is in a Translatour a discretton," &c., &c.

In a series of discourses on the English language, discussions of the origin and meaning of particular words can hardly be out of place anywhere, and therefore I shall be excused for here noticing a confusion of two English words of Latin etymology, both of which occur in the foregoing extracts. From the verb *sentio*, in its two acceptations, the Latins made the nouns *sententia*, opinion, meaning, and *sensus*, first, physical, afterwards, mental, perception. The Romans themselves, at last, confounded these two words. In Old-English, they were distinguished in form as well as meaning, for *sentence* in the time of Purvey was the Latin *sententia*. In Lodge's time, *sentence* had become *sence*, and we now use *sense* for both purposes, *sentence* having acquired the meaning of period, or proposition, as well as that of a judicial decree.

forms the *reader* into the likeness of those for whom the story, the ballad, or the ode, was first said or sung.*

The very supposition, that a genial writer could have acquired his special intellectual manhood in any but his native land, involves an absurdity, for it divests him of his nationality, which is as essentially a part of him as the fleshly organs wherewith he takes into his being the world around him, and reproduces it to the consciousness or the imagination of his readers. Shakespeare is often cited as an instance of genius too universal to bear the stamp of a national mint, and doubtless it is true that in him, more than in any other name known in literature, the man predominated over the citizen; but if we compare his works with whatever else modern humanity has produced, we shall find, if not positive internal evidence of his birthright, at least abundant negative proof that in no land save England could that mighty imagination have assumed the form and proportions to which it grew.

But though the end to be sought in translation is simple enough, the means are neither obvious nor easy of command. There is, however, one principle generally not at all regarded, but which is nevertheless of great practical value in transferring the productions of creative genius from their native to a foreign soil, in such a way that they shall yield the same fruit as in their original clime. It is this: we should choose for our translation the dialect of the period when our language was in a stage of development as nearly as possible corresponding to that of the tongue from which we translate. It seems to have been taken

* It was upon this principle, that Sigurd, the Apostle of Sweden, in a sermon delivered about the beginning of the eleventh century, by an extravagant but not unnatural license, substitutes *cold* for *heat* in threatening the unbeliever with the torments reserved for the wicked in a future state of existence.

En grímmir guðnföðingar * * skulu hræðilligu guðs orði bölvaðir vera ok útkastaðir í ytri myrkr, þar sem fyrir er *frost* ok tannagnastran.—Forn. Sög. III. 168.

And bold traitors to God * * shall be accursed by the terrible word of God, and cast out into outer darkness, where is *frost* and gnashing of teeth.

The imagination of the Northman, whose life was an almost perpetual shiver, would be more readily excited by the idea of suffering from cold than of exposure to torment by fire, an element which to him was always a beneficent agent.

for granted that the dialect of the translator's own time is in all cases to be adopted, and by those who labor for the largest public perhaps it must be, but if the original be a work of true art, belonging to a period of widely different culture, it is as absurd to attempt to modernize it in a foreign tongue as in its own. English historical literature furnishes a good illustration. The chronicles of Froissart were completed in the year 1400, memorable for the supposed death of Chaucer, a period when the French prose dialect was in a much more advanced stage of development than the English. The chronicle was translated by Lord Berners, as great a master of English as any writer of his time, in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, and again, by Johnes in the early part of the present century. Johnes's translation is executed with commendable fidelity, in a good modern English style, and is valuable as a repository of facts and dates, but its relation to Froissart is that of a lithograph to a Titian, while Lord Berners, employing the diction of a period when English prose had advanced to a culture corresponding to that of the French of the preceding century, and, as he himself says, "not followynge his author worde by worde, but ensewing the true reporte of the sentence of the mater," gives you so perfect a repetition of the great chronicler, that you are quite unconscious whether you are reading French or English, and can scarcely resist the belief that you are a contemporary of the fair dames and cavaliers of high emprise, whose adventures are portrayed with such wonderful felicity.

The rule I have here laid down, though very general in its application, has, like most of the principles of literary composition, its exceptions. In the wide differences of culture, of opinion, and of sentiment, which exist between different nations, it may happen that a diction appropriate to the subject as viewed by those for whom a particular work of imaginative art is written, may be quite unsuited to the tastes and intellectual habits of a contemporaneous people, equally, though differently, cultivated. In such cases, a master of the art of translation will select the dialect best adapted to express to his public the conceptions of the author, though it may be that of another century much inferior in grammatical refinement. The fine ballad of Lenore by Bürger, already quoted as an example of imitative felicity of

sound, affords a good illustration. Tales of this sort are no longer current in England, and of course the modern dialect of that country has not been employed to embody them. They belong to earlier English literature, and they are far more effective, recited in the language employed when they were a part of a living mythology, than when clothed in the critical, sceptical dress of a modern magazine. Taylor, therefore, judged wisely in translating the ballad into the simpler dialect in which it would have been told and understood, when the superstitions of the middle ages, if they did not form articles of religious belief, were still constantly exciting the imaginations of the English people. I even doubt whether he has taken too great a license in carrying back the date of the story from the days of the Battle of Prague, an event unknown in English traditionary lore, to the more familiar age of the Lion-hearted Richard's crusade against the Paynim in the Holy Land. Compare these two stanzas of Taylor, in the English ballad verse, with a more literal version in the metre of the original :

He went abroad with Richard's host
 The Paynim foes to quell ;
 But he no word to her had writt,
 An he were sick or well.

* * * *

She bet her breast and wrange her hands
 And rolde her tearlesse eye,
 From rise of morne till the pale stars
 Againe did fleck the sky.

He'd gone with Fred'ric's host to wield
 The sword on Prague's dread battle-field ;
 Nor had he sent to tell
 If he were sick or well.

* * * *

She wrung her hands and beat her breast,
 Until the sun sank down to rest,
 'Till o'er the vaulted sphere
 The golden stars appear.

The train of reasoning we have been pursuing suggests some observations, which I venture to propound at the risk of incurring the pains and penalties justly attached to the philological sin of neologism. I refer to a difference which, if it does not really

exist, ought, I think, to exist in the English use of the words *idiom* and *idiotism*. Both words are given in most English dictionaries, and both exist in the principal European languages, but I do not know that they have been anywhere very accurately discriminated, while in English they are generally confounded. Grammatical writers, for the sake of varying the phrase and avoiding repetition, sometimes employ *idiom* in a loose way as a synonym of language or dialect, but this is repugnant both to the etymology and the proper signification of the word. *Idiom* is derived from the Greek adjective *ιδιος*, own, proper or peculiar to, and in all its legitimate uses, retains the sense of peculiarity or speciality. Besides its lax and figurative use as a synonym of language or dialect, we employ it in three significations.

First, to denote the general syntactical character which distinguishes the structure of a given language, or family of languages.

Thus, when we speak of the *idiom* of French, or German, or Italian, we mean the assemblage of syntactical rules or forms, by which, without reference to the vocabulary, we recognize these languages respectively. If I were to translate, word for word, a page of French or German into English, any person acquainted with those languages would know, at once, by the structure of the periods, from which of them I had taken it. The general characteristics by which he would detect the original, constitute what is called the *idiom* of the language, in the sense I am now considering. For example, in most languages there are different forms of the verb for the singular and plural numbers. Thus, in English, we say, *he is*, but *they ARE*; *is* being used when the subject is in the third person singular, *are* when it is in the third person plural. Now, whatever may have been the origin of the distinctive forms of the verb, there exists in the language, as it is known to us, no reason why *is*, or any other form, should be appropriated to the singular, *are*, or any other form, to the plural. It is, in the present state of etymology, an ultimate, or rather a purely conventional, grammatical fact. A corresponding difference runs through almost all languages, and therefore, the rule, that the verb must agree with its nominative in number, is not an idiom or peculiarity of any of them.

A similar general rule existed in Greek, and in that language

there was no assignable reason why the Greek *ἔστι*, like the English corresponding verb *is*, should be restricted to the singular, and *εἰσὶ*, like its English equivalent *are*, should be appropriated to the plural. It was altogether an arbitrary rule, but still a rule common to the Greek and most other European languages, and so, not a Greek idiom. But to this universal rule Greek syntax made exceptions, the most familiar of which was, that if the plural nominative was of the neuter gender, then the verb was in the singular, and did not agree with its nominative. Thus they said *οἱ ἄνδρες ἀγαθοὶ εἰσιν*, the men *are* good, but *τὰ βιβλία ἀγαθὰ ἔστιν*, the books *is* good. This was a general rule of the language, extending to all verbs, and all neuter nominatives, but it was not a law of universal grammar. It was a construction which characterized and individualized the Greek language, and, therefore, it was a peculiarity or *idiom* of that language.

We use idiom, *secondly*, to denote an individual expression, a form of speech applicable to a single phrase, which is contrary to the general syntax of the language, but yet sufficiently intelligible upon its face even to a foreigner.

Thus if the substantive verb precede its nominative, so that to the hearer the number of the subject is undetermined when the verb is pronounced, the verb in Greek may be, in French generally must be, in the singular, though the nominative be a masculine or feminine plural. Accordingly, though we say in English, there *are* men and women, the French say, with the singular verb, *il est* (or *il y a*) *des hommes et des femmes*; there *is* men and women. This is a departure from the general usage of the Greek and French languages, properly applicable not to a whole class of words, as neuters at large, but only to the substantive verb, and those which represent it.* This peculiarity also is popularly called an *idiom*, but it presents little difficulty, because in expressions of this sort, notwithstanding the apparent want of concord between the verb and its subject, the meaning

* Both English and many other languages show a strong tendency to adopt this form of expression. The phrase *there is* with a plural nominative is sometimes used by speakers who seldom violate the rules of concord in other cases; and many examples of this construction can be found in the works of Lord Bacon, Fuller, and other classical English writers.

of the individual words would never fail to suggest the sense of the proposition.

The poverty of language, the impossibility of inventing new words as fast as new ideas are brought into distinct consciousness, has obliged us to give to the word *idiom* a *third* sense.

This is when we employ it to denote that class of linguistic anomalies, which teachers of languages and dictionaries call *phrases* or phraseological expressions. These are verbal combinations which contravene all rules, general and special, and the purport of which is wholly conventional, and cannot be gathered from the meaning of the several members that compose them. Examples of this are the French phrases, *Jesuis à même de faire telle ou telle chose*, I am in a position to do so and so, I am able to do so and so; *Je viens d'arriver*, I have just arrived; and the thousand other arbitrary constructions in which the French language abounds.

To these latter two linguistic forms the name of *idiotism* has been sometimes, though so far as I know, not consistently applied, in both French and German, and we shall gain much in clearness of expression if we adopt the distinction.

To recapitulate: Let us say that *idiom* may be employed loosely and figuratively as a synonymn of language or dialect, but that, in its proper sense, it signifies the totality of the general rules of construction which characterize the syntax of a particular language and distinguish it from that of other tongues. *Idiotism*, on the other hand, should be taken to denote the systematic exemption of particular words, or combinations of particular words, from the general syntactical rules of the language to which they belong; or in a more limited sense, we may apply the same term to phrases not constructed according to native etymology and syntax, and whose meaning is purely arbitrary and conventional, and then they would properly be styled *special idiotisms*. In a general way, the *idiom* of a language consists in those regular and uniform laws of grammatical construction which characterize its syntax; its *idiotisms* are abnormal and individual departures not only from universal grammar, but from its own idiom.

I have illustrated these distinctions by foreign examples, because the simplicity of English syntax renders its peculiarities

less palpable, and, in general, its rules are little else than negative precepts, but there is room for the same discriminations in our own philology. For example, in English, German, Swedish, and Danish, the adjective regularly precedes, while in Italian and Spanish, it generally follows, the noun. It is the idiom of the language which determines the position. We say accordingly that the English idiom requires the adjective to precede the substantive, and this is a rule which governs the construction in nearly all cases where that part of speech occurs, a rule distinguishing our syntax from that of the Spanish and Italian. So we have our idiotisms. For instance, the phrase, less common in American than in English books, the project *took air*, that is, was *divulged*. So, the use of *help* for refrain, as, I cannot *help* doing it, for I cannot refrain from doing it; it *turns out* that so and so, for, it is now ascertained that, &c.

There are sometimes curious, if not inexplicable, coincidences between the conventional idiotisms of different languages. Thus, both in English and German we use to *make over*, in the sense of to transfer or convey the right of property; as, A. made over to B. his house in Broadway. Here the proper signification of the verb furnishes no clew to the meaning of the phrase in either language. In general, however, phrases of this conventional sort are peculiar to a single language, and without literal equivalents in others.*

The difficulty of translation does not lie in mere idiomatic differences, for the expression 'a beautiful woman' is the precise

* There is a class of idiotisms, apparently derived from popular proverbs or from current fables, the meaning of which is not to be gathered from the proper significations of the words that compose them, and which seems to be conventional. Philological research has detected the origin of many of these, but in other instances the reason of their force is quite unknown. Two such idiotisms occur in a single triplet in *Hudibras* :

When folk *fell out*, they knew not why,
When hard words, jealousies or fears
Set men together by the ears.

It will be observed that conventional phrases in French, are for the most part (though not without exception) more grammatical and less inexact than those employed in English and German. In Italian such phrases are generally vague and rhetorical.

equivalent of *femina formosa*, though the relative positions of the noun and the adjective are reversed, nor can the subtlest intellect discern any difference between the English, 'there *are* birds without wings,' and the French, *il est, or, il y a, des oiseaux sans ailes*. In these instances, notwithstanding the difference of position in one case, and of number and case (*des oiseaux* being strictly a genitive) in the other, we may say the translation is literal; and even in those special idiotisms whose meaning is conventional, we may generally find logical equivalents in all languages of the same degree of culture, though the form of phrase may be very different. If I translate *je viens d'arriver* by, I come from to arrive, I utter nonsense, but if I say, I have just arrived, I convey the precise import of the French phrase, though no one word in the translation, but the pronoun, grammatically corresponds to any word in the original.

But, in spite of the increasing capacity and flexibility of language and the linguistic attainments and dexterity of modern translators, every genial idiomatic work will have peculiarities and felicities of expression which cannot adequately be rendered into any other form. Thought, in every speech, has its ideas which admit of but one mode of utterance, and it is impossible to translate such expressions either into other terms of the same tongue, or into the native words of another. In any two languages there are, to use a mathematical phrase, many incommensurable quantities, many words in each untranslatable into the other, nor is it always possible by any periphrase to supply an equivalent. Of this untranslatability of single words, simple and compound, German offers us many examples. Take the verb *ahnen* and its derivative noun *Ahnung*: We use for them, *suspect, suspicion, and presentiment, forebode and foreboding, anticipate and anticipation*, yet in most cases these words fall far short of expressing the precise meaning of the original; and in compounds, the familiar and readily intelligible participial adjective *entseelt* has no better correspondent than the un-English *examined*; and of the numerous words formed with the prefix *nach*, as the verbs and verbal nouns, *nachwehen, nachleben*, few can be adequately translated by English compounds.

On the other hand, notwithstanding the copiousness of German

in radicals, and its great flexibility and facility in derivation and composition, it yet wants legions of words to embody ideas familiar to the mind, and well expressed by the tongue, of other peoples. Heyse's Dictionary of foreign terms used in German contains not less than forty thousand words, and if we deduct from these the proper, and purely local names, and those for which substitutes have recently been formed from native roots, the great number that still remains proves, that even the Teutonic speech, rich as it is in words, is yet too poor to live without borrowing largely from foreign stores, and, of course, that it cannot, by simple translation into the domestic vocabulary, appropriate to itself and naturalize all the products of alien genius.

As I have elsewhere remarked, it is said to be a characteristic of a perfect style that you can neither add, subtract, exchange, nor transpose a single word in a period, without injury to the sense. If this be so, how great must be the difficulty of fairly translating a sentence, where not only must every word be changed, but where, from the difference in grammar and syntax, the number and arrangement of the words must vary in every member of the period. But the impracticability of making a perfect translation lies less in the want of corresponding phrases and idioms in different languages, than in the impossibility of transferring to foreign words the associations that cluster around the native vocables which they attempt to represent. Of this difficulty our English words *gentleman*, *home*, *comfort*, are instances. Not that every European country does not possess men of truth, courage, honor, generosity, refinement, and elegance of conventional manners—the Castilian felt that the Arab had all this, when he said that his Moslem enemy was an *hidalgo*, a *gentleman*, though a Moor;*—not that Continental Europe knows nothing of the pious attractions of the fireside and the family circle; not that convenience, and luxury, and taste, are wanting to the dwellings of the wealthy in Germany, in Italy, and in France; but it was in England that the ideal of social grace and moral excellence in man, as attributes of humanity superior in worth to the artificial claims of rank and conventional manner, was first conceived, named, and realized; it was in Eng-

* Aunque Moro hijo d'algo.—Old Ballad.

land that the necessities of a rude climate, and the facilities afforded by wealth and a widely-extended commerce, at once occasioned and made possible that consummation of moral and physical domestic enjoyment, which is implied in the phrase, 'the comforts of an English home.' This sacred trio, then, the three talismanic words, which, next to those still more immediately belonging to the religious, conjugal, parental, and filial ties, are the first in the Anglican vocabulary of the heart, are hallowed by older memories, gilded by brighter and more venerable associations, than the corresponding terms in other languages; and hence it is that their claims have been so generally recognized as to secure their adoption, as words essentially untranslatable, into almost every European tongue.

From these considerations, it is obvious that the art of translation is not an ordinary craft, requiring for its skilful exercise no other qualification than a familiarity with the dictionary and grammar of the tongues between which a version is to be made. It demands, further, an intimate, homelike acquaintance with the national characters, habits, and associations connected with both languages, and especially such a complete command of all the resources of the translator's own, as is found only in combination with the ability to conceive and produce, as well as to transplant. Few good translations have been made except by persons themselves distinguished as able writers; and at the same time, there is no better school of preparatory practice, especially for the use of the poetical dialect, than the making of careful translations from authors eminent for originality of thought as well as power of words.*

* Some years since, a work of mine on Physical Geography was translated into a foreign language for publication, by a person not acquainted with the subject treated, and with imperfect knowledge of the language of the original and of that to be employed in the translation. The version was a literary curiosity. The gross and often ludicrous errors amounted to not less than six thousand, or ten to a page. Two things were especially noticeable: one being the frequent instances in which the logical character of a period was reversed by expressing or inserting a negative particle; the other was this: I had introduced into the text numerous citations translated into English from French authors, the French original not being given; these my translator had turned into his own language, not only with general accuracy, but even with propriety of expression. Did the French idiom, with which he was better

The ancient rhetorical instructors advised their pupils to practice what was called *paraphrase* when applied to prose, and *metaphrase* with reference to poetry. They consist alike in translating, if I may thus use the word, the master-pieces of great writers into other words in the same language, as our Franklin did with Addison. Cicero, speaking in the person of Crassus, condemns the practice, on the ground that the original author must be taken to have employed the aptest words and syntax to express his thoughts, and that the pupil would necessarily acquire an inferior style by attempting to clothe them in a different dress. Quintilian, however, defends paraphrase and metaphrase as useful, and will not admit the Latin language to be so poor that the same thing may not be excellently said in more than one form of expression. Franklin added the converse of paraphrase, which I do not know that the ancients practised. He laid aside his version until he had forgotten the phraseology of the original, and then turned it back again, with as close a conformity to Addison's style as he was able to command. Translations from foreign languages are free from the objection which Cicero urges against paraphrase in the same; and, in compelling a close examination of the precise meaning of the original, and aiding in attaining to a command over the vocabulary of our own tongue, their advantages are equally great. As a means of acquiring a knowledge of foreign languages, translation, combined with re-translation, is, I believe, the very best of exercises, except actual and extensive daily practice in speaking. It was by this method, chiefly, that Queen Elizabeth became so good a classical scholar. Roger Ascham, her tutor, says: "After the first declining of a nowne and a verbe, she never toke yet Greeke nor Latin grammar in her hand; but only by double translating of Demosthenes and Isocrates, dailie, without missing, every forenone, and likewise some part of Tullie every afternone, for the space of a yeare or two, hath atteyned to soch a perfit understanding in both the tonges, and to such a readie utterance of the Latin,* and that

acquainted than with English, make itself apparent through the disguise of a foreign speech, and modify my English style so as to make it more intelligible to him?

* It must be remembered that the facility here spoken of refers to a dead language. Had Queen Elizabeth been called upon to sustain a conversation

with such a judgement, as they be fewe in number in both the Universities, or els where in Englande, that be in both tonges, comparable with her majestie." We may be permitted to doubt whether Ascham's account of the progress of his royal pupil is not a little overcharged; but, in any event, it indicates an industry and a perseverance not common in personages of so exalted a rank, in any age or country.

As a means of acquiring a ready and wide command of our native speech, the practice of extemporaneous translation, of reading off into English a book or a newspaper in a foreign language, is perhaps the very best, except the habit of extemporaneous speaking and constant social intercourse with different classes

with Cicero, he would probably have placed a lower estimate upon her knowledge of colloquial Latin than did her learned tutor. There are perhaps few subjects upon which one deceives one's self and one's friends more readily than as regards real knowledge of a foreign tongue. "I cannot speak it, but I understand it," is a common phrase with those who have perhaps sufficient acquaintance with a language to make out the subject of a conversation, but who would at the same time utterly mistake the drift of it. An old friend of mine, who insisted that he perfectly understood whatever was said in Italian, having had some altercation with his landlord about his bill, came to me in great excitement, saying: "The fellow has attached my horses and says I cannot proceed on my journey." On inquiry it turned out that the landlord had simply said—'the gentleman's horses were *attacati* and that his carriage was ready.' A long training of the ear can alone enable a person to appreciate with nicety the sounds, and to distinguish with rapidity the words, of a foreign language. Even when this has been so far accomplished as to allow one to speak the new tongue with fluency, there is still much to be learned. Italians have a very remarkable aptitude for the acquisition of foreign languages, even of those the most disparate from their own. I have known many persons of that nation who spoke English with almost absolute perfection, and who yet, when listening to the conversation of a fellow-countryman in that language, made gross mistakes in judging of his ability to use it.

I once complimented an English lady on the ease with which she spoke German. She smiled and said: "I will tell you a secret; I could only stumble pitifully through a German sentence, till one day I resolved to perplex myself no longer with *der, die, &c.*, or any of their cases, but to stick firmly to *das*. Now I say *das* for all the articles, pronouns, etc., and nobody seems to have found me out."

I have derived much amusement from the mistakes of foreigners in speaking English, but it is a source of proud gratification to me that I owe them nothing. I have paid them in kind. I am sure that in my own awkward attempts to speak their languages, I have made as good blunders as any I have ever seen or heard from them.

in life. But translation has an important advantage over mere vernacular practice. Men who speak much, having only their own thoughts to express, frame for themselves a comparatively narrow vocabulary and syntax, and acquire a wearisome mannerism of style, from which they seldom succeed in emancipating themselves. If we listen often to a particular speaker, we rarely fail to notice that he has not only his pet words, but a set of expletives, stereotyped phrases, and favorite maxims, which he mechanically throws in, in the same way, and much for the same purpose, as the popular bards hummed a burden at the end of every stanza, while summoning their memory or their invention to help them out with the next verse. The practice of extemporaneous translation forces us into new trains of thought, demanding new forms of phrase; lifts us *out of the rut*, (to use an expressive colloquialism,) and confers the power of readily calling up familiar or less habitual words and combinations; thus both enlarging our effective vocabulary, and securing us against contracting a restricted personal dialect which is not only repulsive to our hearers, but which reacts injuriously on our own originality and variety of thought.*

* Dr. Johnson complains of translations from foreign literatures, as one of the most fertile sources of corruption in language. I doubt whether English has suffered much from this cause; and, on the other hand, the attempts at a strict literal rendering of the original text in English, from the time of Hereford to the present day, have enriched both our vocabulary and our syntax with many words and combinations which we could ill afford to dispense with. Indeed, so far from introducing an extravagant number of foreign words and phrases, translation has led to the formation of many happy native compounds and derivatives, which would hardly have been struck out except in the search for vernacular equivalents of foreign expressions.

LECTURE XXVIII.

THE ENGLISH BIBLE.*

THE revised version of the Bible, now in general use wherever the English tongue is spoken, was executed by order of King James I., and was completed and published in the year 1611. A comparison of the styles of the Preface and the text with contemporaneous and earlier English literature, shows that the translation was taken chiefly from older versions, and that its dialect was not that of the current English of its time.

Its relations to the English language are, for a variety of reasons, more important than those of any other volume; and it may be said, with no less truth, that no Continental translation has occupied an equally influential position in the philology and the literature of the language to which it belongs. The English Bible has been more universally read, more familiarly known and understood, by those who use its speech, than any other version, old or new. In the sixteenth century, the English people were more generally and more thoroughly protestantized than any other nation, and, of course, among them the Bible had a freer and more diffused circulation than it had ever attained elsewhere; for though, in individual German States, the reformed religion soon became the exclusive faith of the people, yet those States formed but a portion of the Germanic nation. Although, therefore, the philological as well as the religious influence of Luther's translation was very great, yet it only indirectly and incidentally affected the speech of that great multitude of Teutons who neither accepted the creed of Luther, nor made use of his version.

* According to Wattenbach, p. 101 *et seq.*, the word *Bible* is not derived from the Greek *βιβλίον*, but from *βιβλιοτεχα*, a common designation, in the Middle Ages, for collections of different works or treatises bound together in one or more volumes.

Again : the discussion of the principles of the Reformation and of their collateral results, as a living practical question, connected not only with men's hopes of a future life, but, through civil government, with their dearest interests in this, was longer continued in England than in any other European State. The Puritan movement kept the debate alive in Great Britain long after the wordy war was ended, and men had resorted to the last argument of Kings, in the Continental nations. From the year 1611, the Bible in King James's version was generally appealed to as the last resort in all fundamental questions both of church and state ; for even those Protestant denominations which gave the greatest weight to tradition, allowed the paramount authority of Scripture, and admitted that traditions irreconcilable with the words of that volume were not of binding force. From the accession of Elizabeth, therefore, and more especially from that of James, until the Acts of Uniformity early in the reign of Charles II. for a time extinguished the religious liberties of England, the theological and political questions, which most concern man's interests in this world and his happiness in that which is to come, were perpetually presented to every thinking Englishman, as points which he not only might, but must, decide for himself at his peril and by lights drawn, directly or indirectly, from the one source of instruction to which all appealed as the final arbiter. For these reasons, the Bible became known to the mind, and incorporated into the heart and the speech, of the Anglican people to a greater extent than any other book ever entered into the life of man, with the possible exceptions of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Homeric poems, and the Arabic Koran.

Although particular points in the authorized version were objected to by the more zealous partisans on both sides of the controversy respectively, and though the English Prayer-Book continued to employ an older translation in the passages of scripture introduced into that ritual, yet the new revision commended itself so generally to the sound judgment of all parties, that in a generation or two it superseded all others, and has now, for more than two centuries, maintained its position as an oracular expression of religious truth, and at the same time as the first classic of our literature—the highest exemplar of purity and beauty of language existing in our speech.

Those who assent to the views which have been so often expressed in these lectures, respecting the reciprocal relations between words, individual or combined, and mental action, will admit that the influence upon the intellectual character of the Anglican people, not of Christian doctrine alone, but of the verbal form in which that doctrine has been embodied, can hardly be over-estimated. Modern philologists, Europeans even, have not been the first to discover the close relation which subsists between formulas, the *ipsissima verba* of the apostle, and the faith he proclaims. The believing Jew reads the Pentateuch not only in its original tongue, but, as he supposes, in a form approximating to the very inflectional and accèntual utterance with which its revelations fell from the lips of Moses; and the pious Moslem allows no translation, no modernization, of the precepts of the Prophet, but contends that the inspired words of the Koran have survived, unchanged, the lapse of twelve centuries. There is little doubt that the immutability of form in the sacred codes of these nations is one of the most important among the causes which have given their religions such a rooted, tenacious hold upon the minds and hearts of those who profess them; and the same remark applies with almost equal force to the modern Greeks, who, in their religious services, employ the original text, and to the Armenians, who use a very ancient translation of the New Testament. In like manner, the strict adherence of the Romish church to the Vulgate, and to ancient forms of speech, in all the religious uses of language, is one of the great elements of strength on which the Papacy relies.

The Hebrew and the Arab, the Brahmin and the Buddhist, the Oriental and the Latin Christian, inherit, with the blood of their ancestors, if not precisely the popular speech, at least the sacred dialect of their legislators and their prophets; but the Greek and Latin languages were too remote from the speech of the Gothic nations, to have ever served as a vehicle for imparting popular instruction of any sort among those tribes. Hence, the earliest missionaries to the Germanic and Scandinavian nations learned to address them in the vernacular tongue: portions, more or less complete, of the Scriptures and of other religious books, were very early translated into the Northern dialects; and every man who adopted Christianity, and the culture which everywhere

accompanied it, imbibed its precepts through the accents of his own particular maternal speech. Accordingly, though ENGLISH *Protestantism* has long had its one unchanged standard of faith, common to all who use the English speech, yet PROTESTANT *Christianity*, from the number and diversity of the languages it embraces, has no such point of union, no common formulas; and this is one of the reasons why the English people, with all their nominal divisions and multitudinous visible organizations, have not split up into such a wide variety and so extreme a range of actual opinion, as have the Protestants of the Continent. Whatever theories, therefore, may be entertained respecting the evils of a rigorous national conformity to particular symbols—whatever views may be held with regard to the growth, progress, and fluctuations of language—both the theologian and the philologist will admit, that a certain degree of permanence in the standards of religious faith and of grammatical propriety is desirable. The authorized version of the Bible satisfies this reasonable conservatism on both points; and it is, therefore, a matter of much literary as well as religious interest, that it should remain intact, so long as it continues able to discharge the functions which have been appointed to it as a spiritual and a philological instructor.

I do not propose any inquiry into its fidelity simply as a presentation of the doctrinal precepts of Christianity, both because such a discussion would here be inappropriate, and because the general accuracy of the version is so well established, that it is hardly questioned by those who are most zealous for a revision of its dialect. Considered simply as a composition, however, its relations to our literature, and to the social and moral interests of the Anglican family, are well worthy of examination. In the first place, then, the dialect of this translation was not, at the time of the revision, or indeed at any other period, the actual current book-language, nor was it the colloquial speech of the English people. This is a point of much importance, because the contrary opinion has been almost universally taken for granted; and hence very mistaken views have been, and still are, entertained respecting the true relations of the diction of that version to the national tongue. It was an assemblage of the best forms of expression applicable to the communication of religious truth that then existed, or had existed in any and all the succes-

sive stages through which English had passed in its entire history. Fuller, indeed, informs us that when a boy, he was told by a day-laborer of Northamptonshire, that the version in question agreed nearly with the dialect of his county; but, though it may have more closely resembled the language of that shire, and though it certainly most nearly approximated to the popular speech in those parts of the realm where English was best spoken, yet, when it appeared, it was by no means regarded as an embodiment of the every-day language of the time. On the contrary, its archaisms, its rejection of the Latinisms of the Rhemish Romanist version, and its elevation above the vulgarisms of the market and the kitchen, were assailed by the same objections which are urged against it at the present moment.

The position of the revisers and of their public was entirely different from that of Luther and the German people, when the great Reformer undertook the task of giving his countrymen the Bible in their own tongue; and, accordingly, very different principles were properly adopted by the German and the English translators. German bibles indeed existed before Luther, but they were too strongly marked with dialectic peculiarities—too incorrect and too much tinged with Romish opinion—to serve even as the foundation of a revision; and they had not been widely enough circulated to have diffused among the people any familiar acquaintance with the contents of the sacred volume. The aim of Luther was to give to the high and the low of the Teutonic race access to the authority on which he based his doctrines, in a form for the first time generally intelligible, and scrupulously faithful to the original text. He had before him no repository of a sacred, and yet universally understood, phraseology; and, as a teacher of the people, he could only make himself comprehended by using the dialect which was the familiar every-day speech of the largest portion of the people of his native land. Hence, as he says himself, he composed the phraseology he adopted, out of the living vocabulary which he heard employed around him in the street, the market, the field, and the workshop, and formed a diction out of elements common to the speech of the whole Germanic race. The translation of Luther was, no doubt, most readily intelligible in the provinces where he had acquired his own vernacular; but it was so thoroughly idi-

omatic, so penetrated with the fundamental spirit of the Teutonic speech, that it soon obtained a wide circulation, and was easily understood in provinces whose popular dialect appeared to be very discrepant from that of Luther. Low-German retranslations of this version, indeed, were published, but they did not long continue in use; and for nearly three centuries Luther's text has been the only one employed in religious teaching in Protestant Germany, however widely the local speech may differ from it.* To secure its first introduction to masses ignorant of the Bible and without a consecrated dialect, it was necessary that it should be clothed in words most readily intelligible to those whom Luther desired to reach; but, that extreme familiarity of diction is not a permanent necessity in religious instruction, is shown by the fact that that version, and with it the High-German dialect, have become almost the sole vehicle for the dissemination of Protestant Christianity wherever any branch of the Teutonic tongue is spoken.

Not only is the High-German translation universally read, but with few exceptions, pulpit and catechetical instruction is conveyed in High-German throughout the Platt-Deutsch or Low-German provinces; and we learn from Kohl, that even in the Frisic districts, where classical German is almost a foreign tongue, the peasantry both comprehend the High-German of their pastors, and habitually employ its vocabulary themselves in relation to all religious topics, though not able to converse in it fluently on other subjects.

The translators, or rather the revisers, of the English Bible of 1611 and the British people stood, as I have said, in a totally different relation to each other. These translators were not the teachers of a new doctrine; the public they addressed were not neophytes, nor strangers to the contents or the phraseology of the volume now again to be spread before them. England had been Protestant, already, for almost three-fourths of a century; and there were comparatively few of the English people who had not been taught the precepts of that faith, and made familiar with its oracles in their very cradle, through the translations of

* The latest Platt-Deutsch version was, I believe, that of Bugenhagen, from Luther's Hoch-Deutsch translation, and was published, with annotations, at Magdeburg, 1545. 1 vol. folio.

Tyndale, Coverdale, and others, which were made the basis, and furnished the staple, of the new recension. Hence the doctrines and the diction of the New Testament, which they found nearly unchanged in that recension, had become almost a part of their very consciousness; and there was no occasion to exchange, for a more common or a more artificial speech, the forms of words in which they had already learned whatever of most sacred Protestantism and the Protestant Bible had to teach. Wycliffe and his school in the fourteenth, Tyndale early in the sixteenth, Coverdale, Cranmer, the Genevan, and other translators at a later period in the same century, had gradually built up a consecrated diction, which, though not, as it certainly was not, composed of a vulgar vocabulary, was, nevertheless, in that religious age, as perfectly intelligible to every English Protestant as the words of the nursery and the fireside.*

In fact, with here and there an exception, the difference between Tyndale's New Testament and that of 1611, is scarcely greater than is found between any two manuscript copies of most modern works which have undergone frequent transcription; and Tyndale's, Coverdale's, Cranmer's, the Bishops', the Genevan, and the standard version, coincide so nearly with each other, both in sense and in phraseology, that we may hear whole chapters of any of them read without noticing that they deviate from the text to which we have always been accustomed. When, then, we study our Testaments, we are in most cases perusing the identical words penned by the martyr Tyndale nearly three hundred and fifty years ago; and hitherto the language of English Protestant faith and doctrine may fairly be said to have undergone no change.

I remarked that the dialect of the authorized version was not the popular English of the time, but simply a revision of older translations. It is almost equally true, that the diction of Wycliffe and of Tyndale was not that of the secular literature of their times. The language of Wycliffe's Testament differs nearly as much from even the religious prose writings of his contemporary

* The difference in style between the translations of the Apocryphal and the Canonical Books has been much discussed, but never, so far as I know, satisfactorily explained.

and follower, Chaucer, as does that of our own Bible from the best models of literary composition in the present day; and it is a still more remarkable and important fact, that the style, which Wycliffe himself employs in his controversial and other original works, is a very different one from that in which he clothed his translation. This circumstance seems to give some countenance to the declaration of Sir Thomas More, otherwise improbable, that there existed English Bibles long before Wycliffe; and hence we might suppose that his labors and those of his school were confined to the revision of still earlier versions. But although English paraphrases, mostly metrical, of different parts of the Bible were executed at the very commencement of our literature, yet there is no sufficient ground to believe that there were any prose translations of such extent and fidelity as to serve for a basis of revision; and the oldest known complete translation of the Old Testament, the earlier text in the late Oxford edition of the Wycliffe versions, has very much the aspect of a first essay.

This, down to the twentieth verse of the third chapter of Baruch, is believed to have been the work of Nicolas de Hereford, a coadjutor of Wycliffe—the remainder of the Old Testament, and the whole of the New having been, as there is good cause to believe, translated by Wycliffe himself.* Purvey's recension, executed very soon after, is a great improvement upon Hereford, who closely followed the Latinisms of the Vulgate; but Purvey founded his diction upon that of Wycliffe, and the philological difference between the two is by no means important.

The difference between the version of Wycliffe and that of Tyndale was occasioned partly by the change of the language in the course of two centuries, and partly by the difference of the texts from which they translated; and from these two causes, the

* The preface to the Oxford edition of the Wycliffite versions very satisfactorily disposes of most of the questions connected with the authorship of the different translations which appeared in the fourteenth century, though the internal evidence in support of the opinion, which ascribes to Wycliffe the completion of Hereford's translation of the Old Testament does not seem to me very conclusive. Much information on the translations of the sixteenth century will be found in the Historical Account prefixed to Bagster's Hexapla, London, 1841, and the authorities there referred to.

discrepancies between the two versions are much greater than those between Tyndale's, which was completed in 1526, and the standard version which appeared only eighty-five years later. Nevertheless, the influence of Wycliffe upon Tyndale is too palpable to be mistaken, and it cannot be disguised by the grammatical differences, which are the most important points of discrepancy between them. If we reduce the orthography of both to the same standard, conform the inflections of the fourteenth to those of the sixteenth century, and make the other changes which would suggest themselves to an Englishman translating from the Greek instead of from the Vulgate,* we shall find a much greater resemblance between the two versions than a similar process would produce between secular authors of the periods to which they respectively belong. Tyndale is merely a full-grown Wycliffe, and his recension of the New Testament is just what his great predecessor would have made it, had he awaked again to see the dawn of that glorious day of which his own life and labors kindled the morning twilight. Not only does Tyndale retain the general grammatical structure of the older version, but most of its felicitous verbal combinations; and, what is more remarkable, he preserves even the rhythmic flow of its periods, which is again repeated in the recension of 1611. Wycliffe, then, must be considered as having originated the diction and phraseology, which, for five centuries, have constituted the consecrated dialect of the English speech; and Tyndale, as having given to it that finish and perfection which have so admirably adapted it to the expression of religious doctrine and sentiment, and to the narration of the remarkable series of historical facts which are recorded in the Christian Scriptures.† If we compare Tyndale's New

* The dialect of the Vulgate had more influence on the style of the translation here discussed than I have credited it with in the text.

† The first of the Rules prescribed to the revisers by King James was this: "The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the *Bishops' Bible*, to be followed, and as little altered as the original will permit." The fourteenth Rule was: "These Translations to be used, when they agree better with the text than the *Bishops' Bible*, viz., Tyndale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch, Geneva." Fuller, *Church Hist.*, book x., sec. iii. § 1.

But the *Bishops' Bible*, and, indeed, all the others named, were founded upon Tyndale; and, especially in point of general diction, depart very little from his rendering.

Testament with the works of his contemporaries, Lord Berners and Sir Thomas More, or the authorized version with the prose of Shakespeare, and Raleigh, and Bacon, and other writers of the same date, we shall find very nearly, if not quite, as great a difference in all the essentials of their diction, as between the authorized version and the best written narratives or theological discussions of the present day. But notwithstanding this diversity, the language of the authorized translation, as a religious dialect, is and always has been very familiar to the English people; and I do not hesitate to avow my conviction that if any body of scholars, of competent Greek and Hebrew learning, were now to undertake, not a revision of the existing version, but a new translation founded on the principle of employing the current phraseology of the day, it would be found much less intelligible to the mass of English-speaking people than the standard version at this moment is. If the Bible is less understood than it was at earlier periods, which I by no means believe, it is because it is less studied; and the true remedy is, not to lower its tone to a debased standard of intelligence, but to educate the understandings of the Anglican people up to the comprehension of the purest and most idiomatic forms of expression which belong to their mother-tongue.

The general result of a comparison between the diction of the English Bible and that of the secular literature of England, is, that we have had, from the very dawn of our literature, a sacred and a profane dialect, the former eminently native, idiomatic, vernacular, and permanent, the latter composite, heterogeneous, irregular, and fluctuating; the one pure, natural, and expressive, the other mixed, and comparatively distorted and conventional.

It is unfortunate that an unwise economy, which has been too often observed in reprinting the scriptures, should, in the common editions, have omitted the Translators' Address to the Reader; though it must be allowed that that address by no means acknowledges the full extent of the obligations which the revisers were under to earlier laborers in the same field. The reason of this silence was that the older translations were in every man's hands, and the fact that the new edition was but an adaptation of them was too notorious to need to be stated in detail; it is nevertheless singular that not one of the former English versions should have been referred to by name. The revisers content themselves with

this general statement: "We never thought from the beginning, that we should need to make a new translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one, but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against; that hath beene our endeavor, that our marke." And most successful were they in attaining to that mark, in embodying in their revision the result of the labors of many generations, and of hundreds of scholars, and in making it a summing up of the linguistic equations solved in three centuries of Biblical exposition, an anthology of all the beauties developed in the language during its whole historical existence.

Such is the general history and character of the received version. But what are its relations, past and present, to the language of which it is the purest and most beautiful example? I have said its diction was not the colloquial or literary dialect of any period of the English language. It is even now scarcely further removed from the current phraseology of life and of books than it was two hundred years since. The subsequent movement of the English speech has not been in a right line of recession from the scriptural dialect. It has been rather a curve of revolution around it. Were it not carrying the metaphor too far, I would say it is an elliptical curve, and that the speech of England has now been brought by it much nearer to that great solar centre, that focus of genial warmth and cheerful light, than it was a century ago, when hundreds of words in its vocabulary, now as familiar as the alphabet, were complained of as strange or obsolete.* In fact the English Bible sustains, and always has

* In Lecture xii., p. 228, I remarked that scarcely two hundred words occurring in the English Bible were obsolete.

In examining the vocabulary for the purpose of making that estimate, I used a Concordance which did not extend to the Apocrypha, and the remark should have been limited accordingly. Booker's Scripture and Prayer-book Glossary, which I was not able to consult before p. 228 was printed, contains, besides phraseological combinations, about three hundred and eighty-eight words and senses of words, alleged to be obsolete. Of these, more than one hundred belong to the Apocrypha and the Prayer-book, and among the remainder, there are not less than thirty, such as, *loth, whit, stuff, fret, beebes, haft, with, maul*, (as a noun,) *summer*, (as a verb,) &c., which in the United States are as familiarly understood, in their scriptural senses, as any words in the language. We may therefore take the number of Bible words and special

sustained to the general Anglican tongue, the position of a treatise upon a special knowledge requiring, like any branch of science, a special nomenclature and phraseology. The language of the law, for example, in both vocabulary and structure, differs widely from that of unprofessional life; the language of medicine, of metaphysics, of astronomy, of chemistry, of mechanical art, all these have their appropriate idioms, very diverse from the speech which is the common heritage of all. Why, then, should theology, the highest of knowledges, alone be required to file her tongue to the vulgar utterance, when every other human interest has its own appropriate expression which no man thinks of conforming to a standard, that, because it is common, can hardly be other than unclean?

There is one important distinction between the dialect of the scriptures, considered as an exposition of a theology, and that of a science or profession. The sciences, all secular knowledges, in fact, are mutable and progressive, and of course, as they change and advance, their nomenclature must vary in the same proportion. The doctrine of the Bible, on the other hand, is a thing fixed and unchangeable, and when it has once found a fitting expression in the words of a given language, there is in general no reason why those words should not continue to be used so long as the language of which they form a part continues to exist. There are many words in the English Bible which are strictly technical, and never were employed as a part of the common dialect, or for any other purpose than the particular use to which they are consecrated in that volume; there are others which belong both to the appropriate expression of religious doctrine and to the speech of common life, and of these latter, some very few have become obsolete so far as their popular, every-day use is concerned; but they still retain in religious phraseology the signification they possessed when introduced into the English translation.

meanings now so far obsolete in this country that other words are habitually used instead of them, at about two hundred and fifty. But of these, many are of familiar etymology or composition, and therefore, though disused, readily intelligible, and others are well understood, because they are used in other books still very generally read, so that the number which there is any sufficient reason to regard as really forgotten, does not probably exceed my estimate.

Now the same thing is true with reference to all other knowledges which possess special nomenclatures. There are in law, medicine, chemistry, the mechanic arts, many words always exclusively appropriated to the service of those arts; others, once familiar and common, but which no longer form a part of the general vocabulary of the language, and which are at present restricted to scientific and professional use; and here the phraseology of the scriptures and that of other special studies stand in precisely the same relations to the common language of the people. Each has, and always must have, a special dialect, because it is a speciality itself and has numerous ideas not common to any other department of human thought and action. And not only is this true of the language of science and of art, but of the dialect which belongs to all the higher workings of the intellect. No man acquainted with both literature and life supposes that the speech of the personages of Shakespeare's tragedies, or of the actors in Milton's great epic, was the actual colloquial phraseology of their times; and it is as absurd to object to the language of the scriptures, because it is not the language of the street, as to criticise Shakespeare and Milton, because their human and superhuman heroes speak in the artificial dialect of poetry, and not in the tones of vulgar humanity.

To attempt a new translation of the Bible, in the hope of finding within the compass of the English language a clearer, a more appropriate, or a more forcible diction than that of the standard version, is to betray an ignorance of the capabilities of our native speech, with which it would be in vain to reason, and I suppose no scholars whose opinions are entitled to respect, seriously propose any thing beyond a revision which should limit itself to the correction of ascertained errors, the introduction of greater uniformity of expression, and the substitution of modern words for such as have become either obsolete, or so changed in meaning as to convey to the unlearned a mistaken impression.

The most general objection to any present attempt at revision has been well stated by Trench, namely: that "we are not as yet in any respect prepared for it; the Greek and the English which should enable us to bring this to a successful end, might, it is to be feared, be wanting alike." In fact I doubt whether any impartial scholar has ever examined any of the modern attempts at

revision, without finding more changes for the worse than for the better, and there is one particular in which, so far as I have looked into them, they all sin alike. I refer to the use of the tenses. Revisers have attempted to establish a parity between the tenses of the Greek and English verbs which can hardly be made out, and so far is this carried in some of them, as, for example, in the Gospel of John, as revised by five English clergymen, by far the most judicious modern recension known to me, that an American cannot help suspecting that the tenses are coming to have in England a force which they have not now in this country, and never heretofore have had in English literature.

In a lecture on the principles of translation, I laid down the rule, that a translator ought to adopt a dialect belonging to that period in the history of his own language, when its vocabulary and its grammar were in the condition most nearly corresponding to those of his original.* Now, when the version of Wycliffe appeared, English was in a state of growth and formation, and the same observation applies, though with less force, to the period of Tyndale. The Greek of the New Testament, on the other hand, was in a state of resolution. It had become less artificial in structure than the classical dialect, more approximated to modern syntactical construction, and the two languages, by development on the one hand and decay on the other, had been brought in the sixteenth century to a certain similarity of condition. Besides, the New Testament Greek was under the same necessity as early English, of borrowing or inventing a considerable number of new terms and phrases to express the new ideas which Christianity had ingrafted on the Jewish theology,—of creating, in fact, a special sacred phraseology; and hence there is very naturally a closer resemblance between the religious dialect of English, as framed by the Reformers, and that of the New Testament, than between the common literary style of England and the Greek of the classic ages. It will generally be found that the passages of the received version, whose diction is most purely Saxon, are not only most forcible in expression, but also the most

* In Littre's *Histoire de la Langue Française* will be found interesting observations on this subject, as well as experiments on the use of contemporaneous dialects as mediums of translation.

faithful transcripts of the text, and that a Latinized style is seldom employed without loss of beauty of language, and at the same time of exactness in correspondence.* Whatever questions may be raised respecting the accuracy with which particular passages are rendered, there seems to be no difference of opinion among scholars really learned in the English tongue, as to the exceeding appropriateness of the style of the authorized version; and the attempt to bring down that style to the standard of today is as great an absurdity, and implies as mistaken views of the true character and office of human language, and especially of our maternal speech, as would be displayed by translating the comedies of Shakespeare into the dialect of the popular farces of the season.

There is another consideration, the force of which can hardly be fully apparent except to persons familiar with philological pursuits, and especially with the scriptural languages and with early English. The subjects of the Testaments, Old and New, are taken from very primitive and inartificial life. With the exception of the writings of Paul, and in a less degree of Luke, there is little evidence of literary culture or of a wide and varied range of thought in their authors. They narrate plain facts, and they promulgate doctrines, profound indeed, but addressed less to the speculative and discursive, than to the moral and spiritual faculties, and hence, whatever may have been the capabilities of Hebrew and of classical Greek for other purposes, the vocabulary of the whole Bible is narrow in extent and extremely simple in character. Now, in the early part of the sixteenth century, when the development of our religious dialect was completed, the English mind and the English language were generally in a state of culture much more analogous to that of the people and the tongues of Palestine, than they have been at any subsequent period. Two centuries later, the native speech had been greatly subtilized, if

* The difference between a Latinized and an idiomatic English style is very instructively exemplified in the versions of Hereford and Purvey, and, in a less degree, in Wycliffe's New Testament as compared with the later text. There is a somewhat similar distinction between the Rhemish translation and the Protestant versions of the 16th century, the advantage in almost every instance being with the more idiomatic style, in point of both clearness of expression and accuracy of rendering.

not refined. Good vernacular words had been supplanted by foreign intruders, comprehensive ideas and their vocabulary had been split up into artificially discriminated thoughts, and a corresponding multitude and variety of terms. The language in fact had become too copious, and too specific, to have any true correspondences with so simple and inartificial a diction as that of the Christian Scriptures. Had the Bible then, for the first time, appeared in an English dress, the translators would have been perplexed and confounded with the multitude of terms, each expressing a fragment, few the whole, of the meaning of the original words for which they must stand; and, whereas, three hundred years ago, but one good translation was possible, the eighteenth century might have produced a dozen, none altogether good, but none much worse than another. We may learn from a paragraph in Trench what a different vocabulary the Bible would have displayed, if it had been first executed or thoroughly revised at that period. One commentator, he says, thought the phrase "clean escaped" a very low expression; another would reject "*straightway, haply, twain, athirst, was,* (in the sense of *grow*), *lack, ensample, jeopardy, garner, passion,*" as obsolete; while the author of a new translation condemns as "clownish, barbarous, base, hard, technical, misapplied or new-coined," such words as *beguile, boisterous, lineage, perseverance, potentate, remit, shorn, swerved, vigilant, unloose, unction, vocation,* and hundreds of others now altogether approved and familiar.

From what I have said, it will of course be understood, that I see no sufficient present reasons for a new translation, or even for a revision of the authorized version of the Bible; but there are certain considerations, distinct from the question of the merits of that version, which ought to be suggested. The moral and intellectual nature of man has few more difficult practical problems to resolve than that of tracing and following the golden mean between a passion for novelty and an ultra-conservative attachment to the time-honored and the old. Both extremes are inherently perhaps equally mischievous, but the love of innovation is the more dangerous, because the future is more uncertain than the past, and because the irreverent and thoughtless wantonness of an hour may destroy that which only the slow and painful labor of years or of centuries can rebuild. The elements which enter into the forma-

tion of public opinion on great questions of church and state are so very numerous, and their mutual relations and influences are so obscure, that it is difficult to control and impossible to predict the course of that opinion. In free states, ecclesiastical and political institutions are of themselves in so mutable a condition, that any voluntary infusion of disturbing ingredients is generally quite superfluous, and under most circumstances not a little hazardous. Intimately connected with the changes of opinion on these great subjects are the changes constantly going on in language, and which so many circumstances in modern society are accelerating with such startling rapidity. Fluctuations in language are not merely a consequence, they are yet more truly an indication and a cause, of corresponding fluctuations in moral and intellectual action. Whoever, therefore, uses an important word in a new sense, is contributing to change the popular acceptation, and finally the settled meaning, of all formulas in which that word is an element. Whoever substitutes for an old word of well understood signification a new vocable or phrase, unsettles, with the formulas into which it enters, the opinions of those who have habitually clothed their convictions in those stereotyped forms, and he thus introduces, first, doubt, and then, departure from long received and acknowledged truth.* Experience has taught jurists that in the revision or amendment of statutes, and in sanctioning and adopting by legislative enactment current principles of unwritten law, it is a matter of the first importance to employ a phraseology whose precise import has been fixed by a long course of judicial decisions, and it has been found impossible in practice to change the language of the law, for the purpose of either modernizing or making it otherwise more definite, familiar, or intelligible, without at the same time changing the law itself. Words and ideas are so inseparably connected, they become in a sense so connatural, that we cannot change the one without modifying the other. Every man who knows his own language finds the modernization of an old author, substantially a new book. It is not, as is often pretended, a putting of old thoughts into a new dress. It is the substitution of a new

* "Words are great powers in this world; not only telling what things are, but making them what else they would not be."

MARTINEAU'S Sermon, *The Sphere of Man's Silence.*

thought more or less divergent from the original type. Language is not the dress of thought; it is its living expression, and it controls both the physiognomy and the organization of the idea it utters.

A new translation of the Bible, therefore, or an essential modification of the existing version, is substantially a new book, a new Bible, another revelation; and the authors of such an enterprise are assuming no less a responsibility than that of disturbing, not the formulas only, but the faith of centuries. Nothing but a solemn conviction of the absolute necessity of such a measure can justify a step involving consequences so serious, and there are but two grounds on which the attempt to change what millions regard as the very Words of Life, can be defended. These grounds, of course, are, first, the incorrectness of the received version, and secondly, such a change in the language of ordinary life, as removes it so far from the dialect of that version, that it is no longer intelligible without an amount of special philological study out of the reach of the masses who participate in the universal instruction of the age.

Upon this latter point, I can only recapitulate what I have already said, in expressing my decided opinion that the diction of the English Bible in general cannot be brought nearer the dialect of the present day, without departing from the style of the original in the same proportion as it is made to approximate to more modern forms and a more diversified vocabulary. At the same time, it is not to be denied, that modern criticism has established some better readings of the original text, detected some unimportant misinterpretations of undisputed readings, and pointed out some deviations from idiomatic propriety of expression in the English of our version. None will dispute that the removal of all such blemishes would be highly desirable, but there is little reason to suppose that such an improvement is practicable at the present moment, or that the attempt could now be made without the hazard of incurring greater evils than those which, by any large body of competent judges, are now believed to exist. That there is any *special* present necessity for a revision cannot be seriously pretended, and a strong, perhaps I should say a decisive, objection against a present attempt to revise, is the state of existing knowledge with respect both to the ancient and the modern lan-

guges concerned in the translation. There is no sufficient reason to doubt, that at the end of this century the knowledge of biblical Greek and Hebrew will be as much in advance of the present standard as that standard is before the sacred philology of the beginning of the century; and there are, on the other hand, the strongest grounds for believing that English in its history, its true significance, its power, will then be better understood, and more ably wielded than at this day it is, or can be. The critical study of English has but just commenced. We are at the beginning of a new era in its history. Great as are its powers, men are beginning to feel that its necessities are still greater. There is among its authors an evident stretching out for additional facilities of expression, and as a means to this end, a deeper reaching down into the wells of its latent capabilities, and hence, as I have so often remarked, a more general and zealous study of those ancient forms of English out of which was built up the consecrated dialect of our mother-tongue. A revision of the English Bible, then, is at the present time not merely unnecessary, but, with reference to our knowledge of language, wholly premature, and whatever is now done in this way will assuredly be thrown aside as worthless, whenever changes in the English speech, or the discovery of important errors in the received translation, shall make the want of a better a real want.

The present is an unfavorable moment in some other respects. The acuteness of German criticism, the speculations of German philosophy and theology, have given rise to a great multitude and diversity of opinions, not on questions of verbal interpretation merely, but of doctrine also, which are but just now beginning to be openly and freely discussed in this country and in England, and the minds of men are now perhaps more unsettled on these topics than they have been at any time for three centuries. It is highly improbable, that, leaving the question of competency aside, a sufficient number of biblical scholars could be found, even within the limits of any one Protestant denomination in either country, whose theological views so far harmonize that they would agree in new forms of expression upon points now under discussion; and, of course, between them and scholars of other denominations, the discrepancy would be still wider, so that every sect, however few in numbers, which feels the want

of a revision, would be under the necessity of framing one for itself. There seems, however, to be some reason for believing, that when the excitement growing out of the novelty of the discussions which are going on, in lay as well as clerical circles, shall have subsided, there will be a more general concurrence of opinion, both *in* denominations and *between* them; and then there is room to hope that increased harmony and increased knowledge may conspire to give the English Bible a greater perfection in point of accuracy and of expression, and at the same time a catholic adaptation to both the future speech and the future opinion of English and American Protestant Christianity.

The objections against a multitude of sectarian translations are very serious. The dialect of the English Bible is also the dialect of devotion and of religious instruction wherever the English language is spoken, and all denominations substantially agree in their sacred phraseology, with whatever difference of interpretation. There are always possibilities of reconciliation, sympathies even, between men who, in matters of high concernment, habitually use the same words, and appeal to the same formulas; whereas a difference of language and of symbols creates an almost impassable gulf between man and man. When, therefore, we have, not different churches only, but different Bibles, different religious dialects, different devotional expressions, the jealousies of sectarian division will be more hopelessly embittered, and the prospect of bringing about a greater harmony of opinion and of feeling among English-speaking Protestants proportionally darkened.

At this day, there could be no harmony of action on this subject between different churches. Even Trench, a man of a liberal spirit, seems to reject the plan of *uniting* for this purpose with those not embraced in the organization of his own church, though he admits, that, with the exception of the "so-called Baptists," they might advantageously be invited to offer suggestions—to be decided upon, apparently, by a body of which they are not to be members. Those who proclaim views of such narrow exclusiveness have no right to expect that theologians who dissent from them on questions of ecclesiastical government will be more charitable than themselves, and it is not probable that scholars who are not of the English church will be very prompt to offer suggestions

upon such terms. So long as this sectarian feeling—for it can be appropriately designated by no other term—prevails on either side, there can be no union upon conditions compatible with the self-respect of the parties; and unless better counsels prevail, whenever revision comes, English and American Protestantism will have not one Bible, one standard of religious faith, but many.

Besides the inconveniences of such a state of things as that to which I have just alluded, there is the further evil, that each one of the new revisions will be greatly inferior to what the joint labors of scholars of different denominations might produce. Whatever crude and hasty *opinions** individuals may adopt with respect to the superior learning and ability of their own religious communions, it is very certain that neither the English church, nor any other Christian sect, possesses, within its own limits, so full a measure of knowledge and talent, that in such a work as the revision of the English Bible, it can afford to dispense with the co-operation of other denominations; and the ecclesiastical body which cuts itself off from other branches of the church, by attempting that work without at least an earnest effort to secure such co-operation upon equal and honorable terms, may justly be deemed schismatic.

In a brief discourse like the present, the arguments on this question can be hinted only, not detailed; but I think we may justify the general conclusion, that as there is no present necessity for a revision, so is there no possibility of executing a revision in a way that would be, or ought to be, satisfactory even to any one Protestant sect, still less to the whole body of English-speaking Protestants. To revise under present circumstances, is to sectarianize, to divide the one catholic English Bible, the common standard of authority in Protestant England and America, into a dozen different revelations, each authoritative for its own narrow circle, but, to all out of that circle, a counterfeit; it is a practical surrender of that human excellence of form in the English Bible,

* An old and just definition of *opinio*, is *assensus rei non exploratæ*, and there is a vast deal of sectarian religious opinion in all Christian denominations, which cannot lay claim to any higher logical value.

Veritate manifestata, cedat opinio veritati. Qui est à dire en François, que quant vérité est manifestée, toute opinion doit cesser et donner lieu à vérité.—Oresme, p. 1.

which, next to the unspeakable value of its substance, is the greatest gift which God has bestowed on the British and American people.

NOTE.—During the twenty and more years that have passed since the above lecture was written, a Revision of the Authorized Version of the Bible of 1611 has been undertaken, and the best scholars in England and America have contributed, either as actual translators or as advisers, to its completion. The Revision of the New Testament has made its appearance within the last few months. But a minute criticism of this Revision would involve too much both of theological and linguistic discussion to find an appropriate place in a course of Readings the object of which is the illustration of English philology, not of Protestant religious opinion nor of English classical learning. It may be added that the Revision, whatever may be its merits, has not been so generally accepted in England or in the United States of America, as to be justly considered as having superseded the version of 1611, to which indeed it for the most part conforms. It is not therefore, at present, entitled to be treated as the authorized representation of Protestant views of Christian doctrine, nor as the best example of the English sacred dialect. So far as it conforms to the standard translation, its value as an English classic is, of course, very great, but where it deviates from the earlier version, though there is no doubt sometimes a real and important gain in accuracy of interpretation, yet I do not think that it is, in general, equally felicitous in expression, and consequently does not seem to me to hold so high a rank in this respect.

I cannot avoid the conclusion, that the result of this experiment at Revision will strengthen rather than otherwise, the position taken in this Lecture, viz., that an immediate revision is premature. ♣

LECTURE XXIX.

CORRUPTIONS OF LANGUAGE.

IN studying the history of the successive changes in language, it is by no means easy to discriminate, at all times, between positive corruptions, which tend to the deterioration of a tongue in expressiveness or moral elevation of vocabulary, in distinctness of articulation, in logical precision, or in clearness of structure, and changes which belong to the character of speech, as a living semi-organism connatural with man or constitutive of him, and so participating in his mutations. By these latter changes, language continually adapts itself to the intellectual and material condition of those who use it, grows with their growth, shares in their revolutions, perishes in their decay. Its changes of this sort can be resisted by no limited special effort, and they can be checked only by the same conservative influences that retard the decline of the race to which it is vernacular. Mere corruptions, on the contrary, which arise from extraneous or accidental causes, may be detected, exposed, and if not healed, at least prevented from spreading beyond their source and infecting a whole nation. To pillory such offences, to point out their absurdity, to detect and expose the moral obliquity which too often lurks beneath them, is the sacred duty of every scholar, of every philosophic thinker, who knows how nearly purity of speech, like personal cleanliness, is allied with purity of thought and rectitude of action. When, therefore, the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table ridicules the affectation of responding to a remark of your companion by an interrogative, *Yes?* when a journalist laughs at the Cockney use of *immediately* and *directly* in the place of *as soon as*, or *after*; as for example, *directly John came, I went away*;* or the Ameri-

* It is to be regretted that even Buckle and other distinguished English writers of our day have sanctioned by their example this very objectionable form.

canism of employing *community* without the article, as *in community*, for *in the community*; the vulgarism of such phrases as, *in our midst*, and, *unbeknown* to me; the preciousness, if I may use an expressive Gallicism, of not merely pronouncing but of exaggerating the *t* in *often*, as if it were *ofttun* or *oftten*; the provincial substitution of the obscure for the clear pronunciation of the final vowel, transforming *Mississippi* and *Ohio* into *Mississippüh* and *Ohiüh*; in all these cases, a real service is rendered to the community, and to the language.

Latham appears to me to confound the progress of natural linguistic change, which is inevitable, and the deterioration arising from accidental or local causes, which may be resisted, and he denies that there can be any such thing as the corruption of a language. All languages, he thinks, are equally intelligible, and consequently, equally what they ought to be, namely, mediums of intercourse between man and man, and hence, continues he, "*in language whatever is is right.*" In the concluding paragraph of the Preface to the second edition of his *Treatise on the English Language*, he observes: "I am not desirous of sacrificing truth to an antithesis; but so certain is language to change from logical accuracy to logical license, and at the same time, so certain is language, when so changed, to be as intelligible as before, that I venture upon asserting that not only *whatever is is right*; but also that in many cases *whatever was was wrong.*" There is in this passage a singular confusion of thought and of expression. First it maintains the paradox that when languages have degenerated from logical accuracy to logical license *they are right*, and that when they were spoken with logical accuracy *they were wrong*; and, secondly, the final conclusion contradicts the premises from which it is deduced. The argument is, that language always adapts itself to the uses of those who employ it, that it changes only as they change, and that it is at all times equally well suited to the great purposes for which that faculty was given to man. If this is so, then that which *was* must have been right for the time *when it was*, upon the same principle that that which *is* is right for the present time. To affirm, then, as a result from the general doctrine of the constant adaptation of language to man's nature and wants, that all that at any time *is* in language is *right*, but that something which at a past time *was*

was *wrong*, is not an "antithesis," but a palpable inconsistency, a contradiction in terms. Either, then, our author means that whatever *is* is *right*, and, upon the same principle, whatever *was* was *right*, but, by virtue of necessary changes in speech, much that *was right* is at present *wrong*, or he means nothing at all; and his entire proposition is at war with itself, and, as lawyers say, repugnant. But notwithstanding the authority of Latham, I see no reason why, independently of the evidence of comparison between different stages of a given tongue, we may not as well speak of the corruption of a language, as of the deterioration of a race. No man doubts that certain species or families of animals, man himself included, become, by change of climate, or of other natural conditions, physically inferior to what they have been in former and different circumstances, and there is unhappily equally irresistible evidence of the moral and intellectual deterioration of nations. When therefore a people, once great in mind, great in virtue, powerful in material energy, becomes enfeebled in intellect, depraved in heart, and effeminate in action, and their language drops the words belonging especially to the higher faculties and perceptions, or perverts them to sensuous, base, earthly uses, and is no longer capable of the expression of lofty conceptions, generous emotions, or virtuous resolves, are we not to say that their language is corrupted? So far as respects the needs and conveniences of material life, it may perhaps be true that one form of it is as expressive and appropriate as another, but the theory which I am combating, forgets that language is not a tool, or even a machine, but is of itself an informing vital agency, and that, so truly as *language* is what man has made it, just so truly *man* is what language has made him. The deprivation of a language is not merely a token or an effect of the corruption of a people, but corruption is accelerated, if not caused, by the perversion and degradation of its consecrated vocabulary; for every human speech has its hallowed dialect, its nomenclature appropriated to the service of sacred things, the conscience, the generous affections, the elevated aspirations, without which humanity is not a community of speaking men, *μεροπων ανθρωπων*, but a herd of roaring brutes. When, therefore, popular writers in vulgar irony apply to vicious and depraved objects, names or epithets set apart by the common consent of society to designate the

qualities or the acts which constitute man's only claim to reverence and affection, they both corrupt the speech, and administer to the nation a poison more subtle and more dangerous, because less obvious, than the bitterest venom with which the destructive philosophy has ever assailed the moral or the spiritual interests of humanity.

Besides the moral degradation of language, accidental circumstances, such as the affectations and caprices of fashionable society, the inaccuracies or the whim of a distinguished and influential individual, and especially the ambitious ignorance of would-be reformers, often corrupt language philologically, by introducing violations of grammar, or of other proprieties of speech, which a servile spirit of imitation adopts, and which, at last, supersede proper and idiomatic forms of expression. Again, the usage of a great city or an important province, itself occasioned purely by local and temporary circumstances, may extend over a whole country, and thus words, phrases, syntactical combinations, not only ill-suited but repugnant to the genius of a language, may force their way into it to the exclusion of more appropriate terms, and become permanent, though inharmonious and ill-assimilated ingredients of the national speech. Changes of this sort are not exemplifications of the general laws of language, any more than the liability to be smitten with pestilence through infection is an exemplification of the normal principles of physiology; and therefore a language thus affected is as properly said to be corrupted, as a person who has taken a contagious malady to be diseased.

So with respect to pronunciation. Are not the emasculation of our once manly and sonorous tongue by contracting long vowels into short ones, and by suppressing short vowels altogether, the crowding of half a dozen syllables into one explosive utterance, the thick, indistinguishable articulation, the crazy confusion of the aspirate and the silent *h*,—all of which characterize the native dialect of London, and which but for the influence of printing on pronunciation,* would have spread over the whole island,—are not these corruptions of speech which should be exposed, stigmatized, and corrected, as well as moral delinquencies or vulgarisms of manner? To deny that language is susceptible

* See Lect. xxi., p. 890 *et seq.*

of corruption, is to deny that races or nations are susceptible of depravation ; and to treat all its changes as normal, is to confound things as distinct as health and disease.

I have spoken of the ignorance of grammarians as a frequent cause of the corruption of language. An instance of this is the clumsy and unidiomatic continuing present of the passive voice, which, originating not in the sound common sense of the people, but in the brain of some grammatical pretender, has widely spread, and threatens to establish itself as another solecism in addition to the many which our syntax already presents. The phrase 'the house *is being built*,' for 'the house *is building*,' is an awkward neologism, which neither convenience, intelligibility, nor syntactical congruity demands, and the use of which ought therefore to be discountenanced, as an attempt at the artificial improvement of the language in a point which needed no amendment. The English active present, or rather aorist, participle in *-ing* is not an Anglo-Saxon but a modern form, and did not make its appearance as a participle until after the general characteristics which distinguish English from Saxon were fixed. The Saxon active participle terminated in *ende*, as *lufigende*, loving ; but there was a verbal noun with the ending *-ung*, sometimes written *-ing*, as *clænsung* or *clænsing*, cleaning or cleansing. The final vowel of the participle was soon dropped, and the termination *-and* or *-end* became the sign of that part of speech. The nominal form in *-ung* also disappeared, and *-ing* became the uniform ending of verbal nouns. Between the verbal noun of action and the active participle, there is a close grammatical as well as logical analogy, which is exemplified in such phrases in French and English as *l'appétit vient en mangeant*, appetite comes *with eating*. Hence the participle ending in *-and* or *-end* and the verbal noun ending in *-ing* were confounded, and at last the old participial sign, though long continued in Scotland, was dropped altogether in England, and the sign of the verbal noun employed for both purposes. I have observed on former occasions, that when new forms are superseding old ones, as for example, in the substitution of *its* for *his* as a neuter possessive, *since* for *sith*, there is often a period when good writers avoid the employment of either. This was the case with regard to the new and old forms of the active participle, for in the

Ormulum, which contains more than twenty thousand lines, there is not a single instance of the use of the active participle in either form, though there are four or five participial adjectives in *-end*, and twenty or twenty-five verbal nouns in *-ing*. The ancient termination in *-end* survived in popular speech long after it became extinct in literature, and the vulgar pronunciation, *goin'*, *livin'*, and the like, is a relic of that form, not a dropping of the nasal *g* final in the modern inflection.

The earliest form in which the phrase we are considering occurs is, 'the house is *in* building, or *a* building,' *a* being probably a contraction of the Saxon *on*, or the modern English *in*.* Ben

* The following examples show that the form "in building," or, "a building," was in constant use from the very dawn of English literature to the seventeenth century. In III. (I.) Kings vi. 7, we have, in the older Wycliffite version, *was beeldid*; in the later, *was in byldyng*; in a manuscript of the 14th century, quoted by Hearne, Langtoft's Chronicle I. cxvii., while the church was *in byldyng*; in the old romance of Robert the Devyle, Thom's edition, p. 8, as this chylde was *a berynge* to the chirche, p. 32, whyle your penaunce be *a doynge*; in the prose Morte D'Arthur, Lib. II. c. viii., the mene whyle as this was *a doynge*; in Skelton's Tales, Dyce's edition I. lxxv., there shall you see my tombe *a makyng*; in Lord Berners's Froissart I. 143, had beene longe *a makyng*, p. 255, was longe *a dryvynge*; in Palsgrave's French Grammar, pp. 380, 382, 383, 384, *in doynge*, and other similar constructions; in Tyndale's and Coverdale's translations, John ii. 20, this temple was *abuldyng*; in Cranmer's and the Geneva versions of the same passage, was *a byldyng*; in I. Peter iii. 20, in Tyndale's, Coverdale's, Cranmer's, and King James's translations, while the ark was *a preparing*; in the Rhemish version of the same verse, was *a building*; but in the Geneva, the modern form, the ark was *preparing*; in Holinshed iii. 126, whilst these things were *a dooing*; in I. Kings vi. 7, authorized version, while it was *in building*; in Shakespeare, Macbeth iii. 4, while tis *a making*, Hamlet i. 8, as it is *a making*; in John Smith's Virginia, 280, their shallop, which was *a mending*; in Howell's Dodona's Grove, 107, *a doynge*, and in Hawley's Preface to Bacon's Sylva Sylvarum, *in doynge*, in both these last instances, as well as in all the others, in a passive sense.

Thus, from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century, the verbal noun, with the preposition *in* or *a*, appears to have been constantly employed. The phrase, the ark was *preparing*, given from the Geneva New Testament, in Bagster's Hexapla, is probably a misprint for *a preparing*, as no other example of that form is known to occur until long after the date of that version. The only early instances of a construction bearing any analogy to the neologism, *is being built*, which I have been able to find, are in Fabyan's Chronicle, Ellis's reprint of Pynson's edition of 1516. These are, page 1, "The Cytie of Rome was *begone to be buylded* in the XI. yere of Esehias"; and p. 576, "In this yere also was ye Guylde halle of Lodon *begon to be newe edyfyed*"; but these have little direct bearing on the question. After the construction *is*,

Jonson, in his English grammar, states expressly that before the participle present, *a*, and if before a vowel, *an*, give the participle the force of a gerund; and he cites as an example, "a great tempest was *a brewing*." The obvious explanation of this form of speech is, that what grammarians choose to call a present participle, is really a verbal noun; and, if so, there is nothing more irregular or anomalous in the phrase 'the ship is in building,' than in saying 'be industrious in working, be moderate in drinking'; for the verbal noun may as well have a passive, as an active or a neuter signification.

The preposition *on* or *a* was dropped about the beginning of the eighteenth century, but it is still understood; and in this construction, though the form is the same as that of the participle, the verbal noun is still as much a noun as it was when the preposition was expressed.

But if this explanation be rejected, and it be insisted that, in the phrase in question, *building, making, &c.*, are true participles, active in form, but passive in signification, the construction may be defended both by long usage, which is the highest of all linguistic authorities, and by the analogy of numerous established forms of speech, the propriety of which no man thinks of questioning. The active form is passive in sense in the phrases, he is *to blame*, I give you this picture *to examine*, he has books

or, *a building, making, &c.*, went out of use, the verbal noun was regularly employed with a passive signification, as in this expression in the XXIII. Letter of Junius, "the lines *are drawing* around him," until a very recent period.

Other examples of the use of the participial noun in a passive sense, are: "We have a wyndowe *in werchyng*," Piers Ploughman, Vision, 1451; "Ther the man lith *an helyng*," Ibid., 11599; "Whils *Veni Creator Spiritus is a singing*," Rutland Papers, 18; "In great aduerture of *takyng* with the Sarazins," Froissart, I. 657; "In dout of *betrayinge*," Ibid., 734; "Whyle every thyng was *a preparyng*," Ibid., II. 746; "Whyle these wordes were *in speakyng*," Sir T. More, Life of Edw. V., reprint of Hardyng, 507; "I went to their places where they make their anchors, and saw some *making*; also I saw great peeces of ordinance *making*," Coryat's Crudities, reprint, I. 282; "While these preliminary steps were *taking*," Robertson, Charles V., B. XII.; "The illustrations *preparing* for the third volume," Ruskin, Mod. P., vol. II., Advertisement; "The extent of ravage continually *committing*," Ibid., p. 5, note; but, "it is *being swept* away," Ibid., same page, text; "the palaces *are being restored*," "the marbles *are being scraped*," Ibid., p. 7, note.

to sell, this fruit is good *to eat*. It is true that in these expressions, and others of similar construction, what appears to be an infinitive active is not so, but a relic of the Anglo-Saxon corresponding phrase, consisting of a gerund preceded by the participle *to*, which in that language was not the sign of the infinitive, as it is in modern English; but, nevertheless, the analogical argument from an authorized use of an active *form* in a passive sense remains unaffected. The common expression, these books *sell* well, and many others similar in principle, admit of no such explanation; and the verb, though active in inflection, is as unequivocally passive in signification, as are the Latin *vapulo* and *veno*. Upon what principle, except the passive use of an active participial form, can we explain such phrases as *drinking-water*, a *riding-horse*, for water fit to be drunk, or a horse kept to be ridden? It is no answer to say that these are to be considered as compound words, because the passive sense still remains with the active ending. So, in this expression, 'considering the shortness and uncertainty of life, it is presumptuous in any man to expect to attain to the age of a hundred years,' *considering* is used in a passive sense, as is seen clearly by the French equivalent in this construction, which is the passive participle *vu* or *attendu*.*

The expressions, the *falling-sickness*, a *stepping-stone*, a *spinning-wheel*, a *stumbling-block*, a *drinking-glass*, a *working-day*, the latter two of which at least are true compounds, are not exactly analogous with any I have cited; for though drinking-water is water that is or may be drunk, and a riding-horse is a horse that is or may be ridden, yet we cannot so convert these last phrases. A drinking-glass is not a glass to be drunk; but neither is it the glass that drinks, the day that works, or the wheel that spins. But, though not grammatically identical, these constructions are of the same anomalous character as 'the house is building'—the resolution of which into 'the house is *a* building, or *in* building,' is as easy and as idiomatic as to translate 'drinking-glass' into 'a glass *for* drinking.'

* When the sentence contains a personal nominative with which the participle may agree, it may possibly be regarded as active; as, for example, 'considering the feeble state of his health, *he* ought not to undertake the journey'; which may be resolved into, 'he, considering the feeble state of his health, ought not,' &c.

But, independently of these analogies, we have several combinations in which even the purists, who condemn the phrase in question, employ precisely the same form, and that, too, not with a verbal noun, but with a true participle. To *owe*, to *miss*, to *want*, are all transitive verbs; but no Englishman scruples to speak of *debts owing*, to say that a paper *is missing*, or that a sovereign *is wanting* * to make up a specified sum.

The reformers who object to the phrase I am defending, must, in consistency, employ the proposed substitute with all passive participles, and in other tenses, as well as the present. They must say therefore: The subscription-paper *is being missed*, but I know that a considerable sum *is being wanted* to make up the amount; the great Victoria bridge *has been being built* more than two years; when I reach London, the ship Leviathan *will be being* built; if my orders had been followed, the coat *would have been being made* yesterday; if the house had then *been being built*, the mortar would *have been being mixed*.

Besides these cases of active verbal forms with a passive sense, we have nouns of similar character. *Confessor*, for example, analogically ought to mean one who confesses; whereas it signifies a priest who is confessed to; *prisoner* should be a man who imprisons, but it signifies one who *is* imprisoned. There are even examples of *passive* participles with an *active* sense. A *well-spoken*, or a *fair-spoken* man, is a man who speaks well or smoothly; and *well-seen* in a science not long since meant *seeing* far into, having a *deep insight* into, that science. All languages are full of these anomalies; and he who resolves to utter or write nothing which he cannot parse, will find himself restricted to a beggarly diction.

The employment of active forms with a passive sense, and contrariwise, the attribution of an active force to passive inflections, are sanctioned by the analogy of all the languages to which Eng-

* These expressions are all old. The first occurs in a letter from Henry VII. to his mother, written certainly as early as 1508: "Ye * * have granted unto me * * such debts and duties which is *oweing* and dew to you, &c."—Fisher's Sermon on Countess of Derby, Appendix, p. 88.

Wanting is several times used by Palsgrave in a similar way; as, "though any fewe wordes * * shall fortune * * * to be *wanting*"; and, "which he * * shall suppose to be *wanting*."—Palsgrave, 868.

lish is related. Not to mention exceptional cases, the Latins regularly employed the gerundial both actively and passively; the Latin deponent and the Greek middle voice, passive in form, are active in sense; the Icelandic active participle is used gerundially as a passive; as *ecki er trúanda*, it is not to be believed; in some, at least, of the Frisic dialects, the same construction is used, *tha drivanda* and *tha draganda*, the driving, and the carrying, meaning live cattle which can *be driven*, and lifeless articles which can *be carried*; the Danes say, *blæsende Instrumenter*, blowing instruments, for instruments that *are blown*, wind instruments; and, in spite of the grammarians, few Germans would hesitate to say, with Liebig, *eine zu begründende Wissenschaft*, a science *founded*, or *to be founded*, &c.;* or to speak of *das zu beziehende Haus*, the house *to be occupied*, *eine vorhabende Reise*, a journey *to be undertaken*, while *verdienter* and *Bedienter*, participle passive forms are constantly used actively, the one as an adjective, the other as a noun.

Upon the whole, then, we may say, that the construction 'the house is building' is sustained by the authority of usage, and by many analogies in the English and cognate languages. Nor is it objectionable as an equivocal phrase, because it is very seldom used when the subject is of such a nature that it can be an agent, and always with a context, or under circumstances which show that the participle must be taken in a passive sense.

To reject it, therefore, is to violate the laws of language by an arbitrary change; and, in this particular case, the proposed substitute is at war with the genius of the English tongue.

But if an innovation in the established phraseology of the last two centuries must be made, either for the sake of change, or with the view of harmonizing English syntax to the eye, let us at

* Es giebt in der That Aerzte und medicinische Schriftsteller welche behaupten dass eine auf exacte Kenntniss zu begründende Wissenschaft der diätetischen und medicinischen Praxis unmöglich sei. Liebig, Chem. Briefe 4te. Auflage, I. 17.

Other examples of the use of active forms with a passive sense, in French and German, are the Fr. *voyant*, as applied to colors, in the signification of showy, conspicuous, "le texte n'est par encore fini d'imprimer," Lettre de Clavier à P. L. Courier, 8 Sept. 1809; Diese Stadt * * * * ist zu bauen angefangen. BERGHAUS, *Was man von der Erde weiss*, I. 876.

once cast off the fear of ignorant criticism and the sneers of precisian affectation, go back to the primitive construction, which the popular good sense and grammatical instincts of humble English life have still preserved, and say, with our fathers—‘the ark was *a* preparing,’ ‘the house was *in* building,’ ‘I go *a* fishing,’ ‘he goes *a* begging.’

The participial form is, in most languages, a stumbling-block,* and the resemblance between that part of speech and the verbal adjective is a constant source of embarrassment. How subtle and difficult of application are the rules for determining when the active participle in French is to be treated as a form of the verb, and so not declined, and when as an adjective, and accordingly to be varied for gender and number. And in French and Italian, how hard to know when the participle in the compound tenses is declinable, and when not! We have not the same, but analogous, difficulties in our own words of the same class. There is a large number of both active or present, and past or passive participles, which use has converted into adjectives, and their syntax has been modified accordingly. To the employment of those to which the ear has been familiarized by practice, we are reconciled, but we instinctively shrink from every new attempt to confound words of these two classes. There is at present an inclination in England to increase the number of active, in America, of passive participles, employed with the syntax of the adjective. Thus, in England it is common to hear: “such a thing is *very* *damaging*,” and the phrase has been recently introduced into this country. Trench says: “Words which had become unintelligible or *misleading*,” and “the phrase could not have been other than more or less *misleading*”; “these are the most serious and most *recurring*.” Now, though *pleasing*, *gratifying*, *encouraging*, and many other like words have long been established as adjectives, yet the cases cited from Trench strike us as unpleasant novelties. The rule appears to be this: Where there exists an adjective of corresponding meaning, we cannot employ the participle as an adjective; but if there is no such adjective, the participle may take its place. To apply this: we ought not to say

* Query for the purists: Ought I rather to say, A block-that-is-being-stumbled-at?

very *damaging*, because we have the adjective *injurious*; or very *recurring*, because we have *frequent*. But we may employ *gratifying* and *encouraging* as adjectives, because there are no English adjectives with the same meaning. Upon the same principle, we may justify the use of *misleading* with an adjectival syntax, for, though it has a raw and unpleasant savor, it is objectionable only because it is new.

Many past or rather passive participles have long been employed as adjectives, and it is difficult to lay down a rule for distinguishing between them. A practical criterion is the application of the adverb *very*, which we use to qualify adjectives, not participles, except when the latter have become adjectives; thus we say 'I am *very happy*,' but not 'I am *very delighted*'; though *very tired*, *very learned*, and the like, are freely employed. The inclination in this country is to enlarge the list of these words, and we not unfrequently hear such expressions as 'very satisfied,' 'very pleased.' It is not easy to see why we may say 'a tired man,' 'a learned man,' 'he is very tired or very learned'; but, on the other hand, while we use the phrase 'a disappointed man,' we cannot say 'he is very disappointed,' though he is 'very much disappointed' is an idiomatic phrase.

The more frequent employment of both the participles with an adjectival syntax, is, in its origin, a Gallicism, but it also exemplifies the prevailing inclination to reject purely grammatical distinctions, and to simplify our grammar, by assimilating forms and phrases which suggest no substantial difference of sense, while we are at the same time increasing our power of expression by enlarging our vocabulary, and more nicely discriminating between words of like general meaning.

It is doubtless an improvement in any language to increase the significance of its vocabulary, and to make the meaning of a period depend more on the inherent force, and less on the form and arrangement, of the words that compose it; and therefore, though every man of taste will prefer to follow rather than to lead in linguistic changes, yet there is no sound objection to the tendencies of which I am speaking, except the repulsive effect of all neologisms in syntax.

The same observation will apply to another grammatical subtlety, which, whatever may be its origin, has at present no logical

value or significance whatever. I refer to the distinction between *will* and *shall*, as used with different personal pronouns, whether as signs of the future, or as forms of determination or authority. *I shall*, *you will*, and *he will*, are generally simply futures, predictions; and *will* and *shall* are true auxiliaries. *I will*, *you shall*, and *he shall*, are expressions of determination; and *will* and *shall* are not true auxiliaries. No very satisfactory explanation of a distinction apparently so arbitrary has been given, though some ingenious suggestions as to the origin of it have been offered; but, whatever foundation may once have existed for this nicety, it now answers no intellectual purpose. In Scotland, and in many parts of the United States, *will* and *shall* are confounded, or at least not employed according to the established English usage. There is little risk in predicting that at no very distant day, this verbal quibble will disappear, and that one of the auxiliaries will be employed with all persons of the nominative, exclusively as the sign of the future, and the other only as an expression of purpose or authority. To persons accustomed to be scrupulous in the use of these words, the confusion or irregular employment of them is one of the most disagreeable of all departures from the English idiom; but as the subtlety in question serves no end but to embarrass, the rejection of it, accompanied with a constant distinction in *meaning* between the two words, must be deemed not a corruption, but a rational improvement.

It is impossible, in a single lecture, to notice in detail the thousand violations of grammatical propriety which are constantly springing up, and which are threatening to pervert and denaturalize our mother tongue; but the deliberate introduction of incorrect forms, whether by the coinage of new, or the revival of obsolete and inexpressive syntactical combinations, ought to be resisted even in trifles, especially where it leads to the confusion of distinct ideas. An example of this is the recent use of the adverbial phrases *in respect of*, *in regard of*, for *in* or *with* respect or regard *to*. This innovation is without any syntactical ground, and ought to be condemned and avoided as a mere grammatical crotchet.

The writers of the seventeenth century used these expressions in three senses: First, for '*in comparison with*'; as, the ex-

penses of the government are small, in *respect of* its revenue; secondly, for 'by reason of,' or 'on account of'; as, in *respect of* our ignorance and frailty, we ought to be humble; and finally, as a mode of introducing a subject, limiting a general proposition, or referring to a particular point, in which case it was equivalent to the phrases 'as to,' 'in reference to,' 'respecting,' 'so far as concerns,' &c.* The first use, that expressive of comparison, soon became obsolete, and has not been revived. The form, in *respect* or *regard of*, was then confined to the meaning by reason of, on account of; and *in* or *with* respect or regard *to* was employed in the sense of *in reference to*, *respecting*. This employment of these latter two forms had become well settled, though the first of them was seldom employed except in the dialect of the law. Coleridge was the first eminent writer of this century who returned to the practice of using 'in respect of' exclusively; but his writings never had sufficient currency to produce much influence on the language. Since his time, however, some deservedly popular writers have employed this phrase; and with Trench it is a pet construction, and often introduced when a very different phrase would much better express its meaning. It rests, of course, on the theory that in this phrase, *respect* or *regard* is an independent noun, and therefore should be followed by the preposition *of*. But this, I think, is a mistaken view of the subject. The word *respect* in this combination has none of the meanings known to it as an independent noun, in the English vocabulary. The expression 'in or with respect' is an idiotism, a

* First sense, of "comparison":

The Warres of Latter Ages seeme to be made in the Darke, *in respect of* the glory and honour which reflected upon men from the Wars in ancient Time.

Bacon's Essays, 1689, Essay xxix. Of the True Greatness of Kingdoms.

Second sense, "by reason," or, "on account of":

The Northern tract of the World is in nature the more martial Region: be it in *respect of* the Stars of that Hemisphere, * * * or of the cold of the Northern parts, which * * * doth make the bodies hardest and the courage warmest.

Do., do., Essay lviii. Of Vicissitudes of Things.

Third sense, "relatively to," or, "with reference to":

Timing of the Sute is the principal; Timing, I say, not only in *respect of* the Person that should grant it, but in *respect of* those which are like to crosse it.

Do., do., Essay xlix. Of Suitors.

See also Haven of Health.

phraseological construction of an adverbial character, and in its ordinary modern use, it is the equivalent of *relatively*. Old writers sometimes say 'respectively to.' This is now disused; but 'relatively to' is by no means unfrequent, and 'in respect of,' used in this sense, is just as gross a violation of English grammar as to write 'relatively of, or in reference of.'

The mere violation of a grammatical rule would be a comparatively small evil; but most of the writers who have adopted this innovation, are so anxious to parade it as a badge of the style of a school, that they drag it in on all occasions where they can by any chance contrive to introduce it, very often employing it in constructions that leave it difficult to determine whether they mean *relatively to*, or *by reason of*, or *in point of*; and the vague use of the phrase, of course, tends to embarrass the reader by confounding in expression things logically very distinct.*

The two changes which I have now been considering, are not of popular but of scholastic origin, and they are wholly the fruit of an affectation of superior correctness. But there is, among the novelties I have referred to, one which originated with the multitude, and has a psychological foundation, though it is too much at variance with the general analogy of the language to deserve countenance. I refer to the use of the word *community* without the article, when not employed in the sense of *in common*; as, for example, '*Community* is interested in the question'; 'the policy is injurious to *community*.' So far as I am aware, no respectable writer has sanctioned this form of speech, and it is justly regarded as a very gross vulgarism; but I could name persons of some position in the literary world, who employ it colloquially. The general rule is, that common nouns employed in a definite sense in the singular number, must take the article. Thus, in the first of the instances just given, though ignorant people, and some who are not ignorant except in this particular, say '*Community* is interested in the question,' no one would say,

* Nobody ever thinks of saying, "in *reference of*"; but if these phrases are to be governed by the rules of English construction of *nouns*, there is as good ground for this expression as for "in *respect of*." The Latin etymology of *respect* has nothing to do with the question, for the Latin primitive was not used for any such purpose, or in any such construction; and the phrase in question is strictly an *English* idiom.

'*Public* is interested in the question.' The philological instinct of every English-speaking man would be shocked at the omission of the article, and would correct the phrase by supplying it, '*The public is interested.*' Now, the grammatical category of the words *community* and *public* in these examples is the same. Why, then, do some ears demand the article in one case, and reject it in the other? The explanation is this. When we *personify* common nouns used definitely in the singular number, we may omit the article. Thus *Holy Church*, not *the Holy Church*, was constantly used by old writers, because the church was invested with personality, regarded as a thinking, acting, authoritative entity. For the same reason, *Parliament*, and in England, *Ministers*, used instead of *the ministry*, do not take the article; nor, according to present usage, does *Congress*, as applied to our National Legislature; and in the ecclesiastical proceedings of some religious denominations, *Convention* and *Synod* are employed in the same way, on the same principle. With respect to *Congress*, the omission of the article is recent, for during the Revolution, while the Federal Government was a body of doubtful authority and permanence, and not yet familiar to the people as a great continuing, constitutive, and ordaining power, the phrase used was commonly '*the Congress*,' and such is the form of expression in the Constitution itself. But when the Government became consolidated, and Congress was recognized as the paramount legislative power of the Union, the embodiment of the national will, it was personified and the article dropped, and in like manner, the word *Government* is often used in the same way. Now in our time, as I have often had occasion to remark, society has become more intensely social, the feeling of union and of mutual interest, the consciousness of reciprocal right and duty, are strengthened, and the body of the nation is more habitually regarded as a homogeneous self-conscious agent. Hence, what we call '*the community*' is conceived of as a being, not as a thing; as an organic combination, a person in short, not as an assemblage of unrelated individuals. Accordingly, the word *community* is beginning to take the syntax of personal and personified nouns, and to reject the article, while *public*, which we employ in a sense implying less of common feeling and common interest than Latin usage ascribed to it, is uniformly con-

strued with the article. The omission of the article before this noun, though not defensible, is not without a show of reason, and deserves less condemnation than 'is being built' and 'in respect of,' which are, with most of those who use them, at best but philological coxcombs.

The history of the classical languages and literature affords little encouragement to those who hope for further substantial improvement in the English speech, or even to those who are striving to arrest its degeneracy and decay. The tongues of Hellas and Rome had each but a single era of vigor and perfection; and the creative literature of Greece extends over a period but a hundred years longer than that which has elapsed since Chaucer sang. Six centuries comprise all that has made the Grecian intellect immortal. Roman literature, essentially borrowed, or at least imitative, and commencing only after the oracles of Hellenic genius had ceased to give responses, flourished but half as long. So, in modern times, Italy was but three hundred years a power in the world of letters, and Spain had scarcely a longer age of intellectual activity. Germany, on the contrary, has an old literature, and a new, a *Nibelungenlied*, and after six centuries, again a *Faust*; and the present century affords evidence that the mind of the Anglican race is rousing itself to win new prizes in the arena of letters. There was one cause of decadence in the classical languages, which does not exist in those of the modern Gothic stock. Greece and Rome had no foreign fountains from which to draw, when their own were waxing turbid and dry, no old literature, no record of a primitive, half-forgotten language, no long-neglected but rich mine of linguistic wealth whence the unwrought ores of speech could yet be extracted; and hence their literature died, because their tongues were consumed, their material exhausted. If such a fate awaits the genius and the language of the Anglican people, it is but the common lot of all things human; but we are nevertheless far from the day when the resources of our maternal speech will all have been made available, and when nothing but stereotyped repetition will be left for our writers. The Saxon legions which the Norman irruption drove from the field may yet be rallied; and, with the renovation of our language, we may still hope for a blessing which was denied to Hellas and Latium: the revival of the glories of a national literature.

LECTURE XXX.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN AMERICA.

THE English language in America is necessarily much affected by the multitude of new objects, processes, and habits of life that qualify our material existence in this new world, which, with sometimes incongruous architecture, we are building up out of the raw stock that nature has given us; by the great influx of foreigners speaking different languages or dialects, who, in adopting our speech, cannot fail to communicate to it some of the peculiarities of their own;* by climatic and other merely material causes which affect the action of the organs of articulation, and of course the form of spoken words; by the generally diffused habit of reading, which makes pronunciation and phrase

* A striking instance of the transfer of accent and intonation from one speech to another came under my own personal observation some years since. While travelling in one of the long American railway carriages which convey many passengers in a single compartment, I noticed two respectably dressed women who occupied seats at some distance from my own, and who were keeping up a lively conversation in a language unintelligible to me. Many of the words they used seemed much like English, many others, though not *High* or *Low* Dutch, or Scandinavian, might possibly have been of the Gothic stock, and I concluded that the women were using some Germanic dialect not familiar to me. My curiosity was piqued, and I thought it not a breach of good manners to exchange my seat for a nearer position in order to ascertain what language they were speaking. The *tones* and *modulations* of their voices were so exactly alike that I could not distinguish between them, but after listening a few minutes I made out enough of the dialogue to learn that the two women were sisters, one just arrived from the Scotch Highlands, the other an emigrant who had been in the United States some years. The new-comer, though understanding English, did not speak it; the other, without having forgotten her native tongue, had been long enough in America to have lost her fluency in the use of it, and in their conversation each was speaking the language most familiar to her, though the *native intonation* and *accent* were no less marked in the one than in the other.

more formal and also more uniform; and doubtless by other more obscure and yet undetected causes.

Thus far, it can by no means be said that any distinct dialectic difference has established itself between England and the United States; and it is a trite observation, that, though very few Americans speak as well as the educated classes of Englishmen, yet not only is the *average* English used here, both in speaking and writing, better than that of the great mass of the English people, but there are fewer local peculiarities of form and articulation in our vast extent of territory than on the comparatively narrow soil of Great Britain. In spite of disturbing and distracting causes, English is more emphatically *one* in America than in its native land; and if we have engrafted on our mother-speech some wide-spread corruptions, we have very nearly freed the language, in our use of it, from some vulgar and disagreeable peculiarities exceedingly common in England.

So far as any tendency to divergence between the two countries exists, it manifests itself at present rather in the spoken than in the written dialect, in pronunciation rather than in vocabulary and grammatical structure. It can hardly be denied that a marked difference of *accent* is already observable; but, though a very few words current on one side of the Atlantic are either obsolete or not yet introduced upon the other, it would be difficult to frame a written sentence, which would be pronounced good English by competent judges in America, and condemned as unidiomatic in England.

Some noticeable local and general differences between American and British English may be explained by the fact, that considerable bodies of Englishmen sometimes emigrated from the same vicinity, and that in their new home they and their multiplied descendants have kept together and continued to employ dialectic peculiarities of their native speech, or retained words of general usage, which elsewhere perished. Thus the inhabitants of Eastern Virginia were early settlers, and have intermixed little with the descendants of other colonists or strangers. Hence, they are said to retain some Shakespearean words not popularly known in other American or even English districts; and the dialect of Southeastern Massachusetts, which is inhabited by the unmixed progeny of the first immigrants, is marked

by corresponding individualities. It is to the influence of such causes that we owe some excellent words that have now become universal in the United States, as, for example, the verb *to will*—a word which has strangely been suffered to perish in England without leaving any substitute or equivalent behind it.

In the use of colloquialisms not only tolerated but preferred in conversation, though scarcely allowable in writing, the two nations differ considerably. What our own self-indulgences are, in this respect, it is difficult for an American to say, because he becomes conscious of them, as national peculiarities, only when his attention is called to them by criticisms which good-breeding seldom permits an Englishman to make. In England, on the other hand, an educated American hears, in the best circles, familiar expressions and grammatical licenses which he would himself not venture to employ in America. For instance, he will most frequently hear *it is me*, and even *it is him*, instead of *it is I*, *it is he*. Some English grammarians think the former of these expressions defensible; and, in the analogy of the French and Danish languages, where the corresponding forms are not merely allowable but obligatory, there lies an argument of some weight; but this apparent grammatical solecism is not sanctioned by Anglo-Saxon usage, nor by the authority of good writers. *What will this cost to print?* would perhaps not strike an American oddly, but he would himself say: *What will it cost to print this?* *Blunt* and *dull* are distinct in America, *blunt* being applied only to the penetrating point, and *dull* to the cutting edge of an instrument. They now seem to be used indiscriminately in England, though they were formerly distinguished, as appears from Shakespeare: Rich. III. iv. 4. *Starve*, which in England is applied to extreme suffering either from cold or hunger, is used in America only in reference to the latter. In the United States *coal* is employed where the English use *coals*. An Englishman would perhaps say: The *coal* in a mine, but he always speaks of this substance as *coals*, however great the quantity, when it is broken up so as to be ready for use. We, on the other hand, never employ the plural form except as applied to fragments in actual combustion.*

* I have noticed in some rather recent English periodicals certain words which I do not remember to have seen or heard among us. In an obituary

The most important peculiarity of American English is a laxity, irregularity, and confusion in the use of particles. The same thing is, indeed, observable in England, but not to the same extent, though some gross departures from idiomatic propriety, such as *different to*, for *different from*, are common in England, which none but very ignorant persons would be guilty of in America. These may seem trifling matters, and in languages abounding in inflections they might be so; but in a syntax, depending, like ours, so much upon the right use of participles, strict accuracy in this particular becomes seriously important.

In the tenses of the verbs, I am inclined to think that well-educated Americans conform more closely to grammatical propriety than the corresponding class in England. At least, the proper use of the compound preterite is more generally with us. In English writers of some pretensions, we meet such phrases as 'this plate *has been* engraved by Albert Dürer,' 'this palace *has been* designed by Michael Angelo,' for *was* engraved, *was* designed. Such an abuse of the proper office of the preterite is never heard in America. In general, I think we may say, that in point of naked syntactical accuracy, the English of America is not at all inferior to that of England; but we do not discriminate so precisely in the meaning of words, nor do we habitually, in either conversation or in writing, express ourselves so gracefully, or employ so classic a diction as do the English. Our taste in language is less fastidious, and our licenses and inaccuracies are more frequently of a character indicative of want of refinement and elegant culture, than those we hear in educated society in England.

notice of De Morgan, in the *Athenæum* of March 25, 1871, *paradoxer* and *paradoxist* are used for one who maintains paradoxes. In the same periodical of May 5, 1871, I find this phrase: Caligraphic evidence has seemed to demonstrate that Lady Temple at least *handwrote* the *Junian* Letters. In *Nature*, March, 1871, there is a notice of a Paper read before the Anthropological Society of Great Britain and Ireland, entitled: On the *Racial* aspects of the Franco-German War; and the word *racial* frequently occurs in the *Abstracts* of the same Scientific Journal. Most words of this kind, however, cross the Atlantic so rapidly that it is often difficult to be certain of their true nationality. Even the honor of the parentage of certain *slang* phrases is disputable, and many an American has been astonished to hear from an English acquaintance an expression of this character—utterly new to him, and very un-American besides—followed by: "As you say in America."

The causes of the differences in pronunciation are partly climatic, and therefore difficult, if not impossible, to resist; and partly owing to a difference of circumstances. Of this latter class of influences, the universality of reading in America is the most obvious and important. The most marked difference is, perhaps, in the length, or prosodical quantity, of the vowels; and both the causes I have mentioned concur to produce this effect. We are said to drawl our words by protracting the vowels, and giving them a more diphthongal sound than the English. Now, an Englishman who reads, will habitually utter his vowels more fully and distinctly than his countryman who does not; and, upon the same principle, a nation of readers, like the Americans, will pronounce more deliberately and clearly than a people, so large a proportion of whom are unable to read, as in England. From our universal habit of reading, there results not only a greater distinctness of articulation, but a strong tendency to assimilate the spoken to the written language.* Thus Americans incline to give to every syllable of a written word a distinct enunciation; and the popular habit is to say *dic-tion-ary, mil-it-ar-y*, with a secondary accent on the penultimate, instead of sinking the third syllable, as is so common in England. There is no doubt something disagreeably stiff in an anxious and affected conformity to the very letter of orthography; and to those accustomed to a more hurried utterance, we may seem to drawl when we are only giving a full expression to letters, which, though etymologically important, the English habitually slur over, sputtering out, as a Swedish satirist says, one-half of the word and swallowing the other. The tendency to make the long

* That this tendency exists to some extent in England also, even in the most conservative classes, I infer from the following anecdote. Some years since a letter of introduction from an English friend was handed me by another English gentleman, and in this letter the writer took the trouble to give me the proper English pronunciation of the name of the person introduced, this pronunciation not being in conformity with the spelling. Of course I was careful to address my new acquaintance as advised, but, to my surprise, when this gentleman spoke of his wife, he called her Lady — exactly in conformity with the spelling of the name. On my asking for an explanation, this answer was given: "Oh, yes, we were always called — formerly, but it is so unlike the spelling that it seems like an affectation in these days, and we now prefer to conform the pronunciation of our name more to its orthography."

vowels diphthongal is noticed by foreigners as a peculiarity of the orthoepy of our language; and this tendency will, of course, be strengthened by any cause which produces greater slowness and fulness of articulation. Besides the influence of the habit of reading, there is some reason to think that climate is affecting our articulation. In spite of the greater coldness of our winters, our flora shows that the climate of even our Northern States belongs, upon the whole, to a more Southern type than that of England. In Southern latitudes, at least within the temperate zone, articulation is generally much more distinct than in Northern regions. Witness the pronunciation of Spanish, Italian, Turkish, as compared with English, Danish, and German. Participating, then, in the physical influences of a Southern climate, we have contracted something of the more distinct articulation that belongs to a dry atmosphere, and a clear sky. And this view of the case is confirmed by the fact that the inhabitants of our Southern States incline, like the people of Southern Europe, to throw the accent towards the end of the word; and thus, like all nations that use that accentuation, bring out all the syllables. This we observe very commonly in the comparative Northern and Southern pronunciation of proper names. I might exemplify by citing familiar instances; but, lest that should be invidious, it may suffice to say that, not to mention more important changes, many a Northern member of Congress goes to Washington a *dactyl* or a *trochee*, and comes home an *amphibrach* or an *iambus*. Why or how external physical causes, as climate and modes of life, should affect pronunciation, we cannot say; but it is evident that material influences of some sort are producing a change in our bodily constitution, and we are fast acquiring a distinct national Anglo-American type. That the delicate organs of articulation should participate in such tendencies, is altogether natural; and the operation of the causes which give rise to them, is palpable even in our hand-writing, which, if not uniform with itself, is generally so unlike common English script as to be readily distinguished from it.

To the joint operation, then, of these two causes, universal reading and climatic influences, we must ascribe our habit of dwelling upon vowel and diphthongal sounds, or drawling, if that term be insisted upon. This peculiarity, it must be admitted, is

extremely disagreeable, particularly to a delicate and fastidious native ear, to which long familiarity has rendered the language sufficiently intelligible even when not pronounced with marked distinctness; but it is often noticed by foreigners as both making us more readily understood by them in speaking our own tongue, and as connected with a flexibility of organ which enables us to acquire a better pronunciation of other languages than is usual with Englishmen.* In any case, as, in spite of the old adage, speech is given us that we may make ourselves understood, our drawling, however prolonged, is preferable to the nauseous, foggy, mumbling thickness of articulation which characterizes the cockney, and is not unfrequently affected by Englishmen of a better class.

It is to the same tendency to a prolonged and consequently distinct pronunciation of the vowels, that we are to ascribe the general retention of some, and the partial preservation of other, vowel sounds in America, now pretty uniformly banished out of the orthoepy of English writers on pronunciation, though not yet quite out of the actual speech of the British people. One of these is the sound of *o* in *none*, intermediate between the participle *known* and the noun *nun*. This is rather peculiar to New England, and is used in *coat*, which is not made to rhyme with *quote* or *boat*, and in many other words. The other is the long *e* in *there*, which Walker and his sequela make identical with *a* in *fate*. This latter sound, as I have before remarked, is by most Continental phonologists justly regarded as distinct from the *a* in *fate*, and as properly the long vowel corresponding to the short *a* in *carry*; but it seems destined to extinction, and America is in this respect following the example of England.

* The influence of the habit of full and distinct articulation in the orthoepy of the native language upon our pronunciation of foreign tongues, is well exemplified in the readiness with which Italians acquire a good English accent. None of the Romance, or even Gothic nations, learn to speak English so well as the Italians. The same remark applies with great force to the Turks. The articulation of Turkish is so distinct, that upon first hearing it, you follow the speaker, syllable by syllable. The Turks acquire the sounds of foreign tongues with great facility. The common seal-engravers of Constantinople, upon hearing a foreign name, will at once repeat it, and write it down for engraving, with as close a conformity to the true pronunciation as the Arabic alphabet admits of.

There is, in many parts of the United States, a strange confusion with regard to the use of the letter *r*. Indeed, scarcely any consonantal sound undergoes so many modifications in pronunciation in different countries as this. In some languages it is pronounced with a vibration of the uvula, and is at the same time distinctly guttural; in others, it is articulated with a rapid vibration of the tongue, and a strong emission of the breath; in the Sandwich Islands it is scarcely distinguishable from *l*,* and though marked by the rough breathing in some parts of the British islands, in others it is but an aspiration almost as inarticulate as *h*. The Romans called this consonant the *litera canina*, the snarling letter, and the modern Italians pronounce it with a very forcible trill. I believe the pronunciation I mentioned as characteristic of some American districts, is not peculiar to the United States, but occurs also in England. It consists in suppressing the *r* where it should be heard, and adding it where it should not. One need not go a day's journey from New York to find educated persons who call the municipal rule of action the *lor*, and yet style the passage from one room to another a *doak*.

Analogous to this are two English vulgarisms, from which we are almost wholly free. No American young lady laments that she "never knows when to *hexasperate* the *hairch*"; nor is any cis-atlantic Weller embarrassed as to whether he shall spell *veal* with a *ve*. To ears accustomed to discriminate between the use and omission of the *h*, and between the letters *v* and *w*, it seems strange that they can ever be confounded; but I believe they are nowhere so clearly distinguished as in the United States. The Greeks and Romans, as I have observed in a former lecture, had the same embarrassment as the vulgar English with respect to the *h*; and it finally disappeared from the articulation of the Southern Romance languages altogether. Were it not for the influence of printing, the rough breathing of the *h* would probably long before this have ceased to be heard in English; and it is to the same cause alone that we are to ascribe the perpetuation

* This peculiar articulation of *r* is found also in dialects of Sardinia, and in some districts on the Italo-Swiss Alpine frontier. A foreign ear finds it difficult to decide whether the natives say *Kirche* or *Kilche*.

of the distinction between the *v* and the *w*, one or the other of which has become obsolete in the pronunciation of most languages which originally possessed them both.

But to return: there are other differences between our American accent and that of the English, which are as yet too fleeting and subtle to admit of definition; and in fact we differ as widely among ourselves in this particular as any of us do from the people of Great Britain. So far as these shades of articulation can be characterized, they seem to me to lie chiefly in the intonation; and I think no Eastern man can hear a native of the Mississippi Valley use the *O* vocative, or observe the Southern pronunciation of ejaculatory or other emphatic phrases, without perceiving a very marked, though often indescribable, difference between their and our utterance of the same things.

The integrity, and the future harmonious development of our common Anglican speech in England and America, are threatened by a multitude of disturbing influences. Language, being a living organic thing, is, by the very condition of its vital existence, by the law of life itself, necessarily always in a progressive, or at least a fluctuating state. To fix it, therefore, to petrify it into immutable forms, is impossible; and, were it possible, would be fatal to it as a medium of intercommunication suited to the ever-changing life of man. At the same time, something can and should be done to check its propensity to wandering growth, and especially the too rapid divergence of what may ultimately become the two great dialects of the English tongue. At present, the predominance of the commercial and the political over the social relations of the two countries, makes the unity of our written speech especially important; but the wonderful increase in the facilities of travel, destined perhaps to be superseded by other still swifter conveyances, is constantly multiplying the means and the occasions of personal communication between the two peoples; and, indeed, we are already in time, almost in space, nearer to England than to the remoter borders of our own wide-spread empire. The sea is, even now, no longer what Horace found the Adriatic—a gulf of dissociation—but a bond of union, a pathway of rapid intercommunion, and with increased frequency of individual intercourse, grows also the importance of the identity of our spoken tongue. Let me, therefore, express my entire dissent

from the views of those who would imbitter the rivalries of commerce by the jealousies of a discordant dialect—who would hasten the process of separation between the stock and the offshoot, and cut off the sons of the Pilgrim and the Cavalier from their common inheritance in Chaucer and Spenser, and Bacon and Shakespeare, and Milton and Fuller, by Americanizing, and consequently denaturalizing, the language in which our forefathers have spoken, and prayed, and sung, for a thousand years. If we cannot prevent so sad a calamity, let us not voluntarily accelerate it. Let us not, with malice prepense, go about to republicanize our orthography and our syntax, our grammars and our dictionaries, our nursery hymns and our Bibles, until, by the force of irresistible influences, our language shall have revolutionized itself. When our own metaphysical inquiries shall establish a wiser philosophy than that of Bacon; when a Columbian Shakespeare shall awake to create a new and transcendent genus of dramatic composition; and when the necessities of a loftier inspiration shall impel our home-born bards to the framing of a nobler diction than the poetic dialect of Albion, it will be soon enough to repudiate that community of speech, which, in spite of the keenly conflicting interests of politics and of commerce, makes us still one with the people of England.

The inconveniences resulting from the existence of local dialects are very serious obstacles to national progress, to the growth of a comprehensive and enlightened patriotism, to the creation of a popular literature, and to the diffusion of general culture. In a state where the differences of speech are numerous and great, the community is divided into so many disjointed fragments, that the notion of a commonwealth can scarcely be developed; for speech is the great medium of sympathy between man and man; and even the animosities of rival religions are not more deep-seated and irreconcilable than the jealousies and repugnancies, which never fail to exist between neighboring peoples who have no common tongue. Where there are numerous dialects, but few can be so far cultivated as to possess a living literature, and many even will exist only in the form of unwritten speech. Poverty, want of opportunity, sectional pride, will prevent most of those who have no written language from acquiring the dialect of their more fortunate neighbors who possess a literature; and but few

intelligent philanthropists will occupy themselves with the intellectual or the spiritual interests of those with whom, though of the same race and the same commonwealth, they can communicate only through an interpreter. What we consider distortions of our mother-tongue are more offensive to us than the widest diversities between it and unallied languages; and we regard a fellow-citizen, who speaks a marked provincial English, with a contempt and aversion which we do not bestow upon the foreigner who speaks no English at all. The unhappy jealousies which have a hundred times defeated the hopes of Italian patriots, are very intimately connected with their differences of language. Every province, every great city, has its dialect, often unintelligible, always ridiculous, to the natives of a different locality; and one finds in the popular literature of Italy—as for instance in the *Secchia Rapita*—frequent exhibitions of a mutual hate, apparently imbibited quite as much by differences of speech, as by rivalries of interest. Of course, all educated persons know the Tuscan, which the great Florentines, Dante and Petrarch and Boccaccio, made the language of literature; but, as Byron says,

“Few Italians *speak* the right Etruscan”;

and in Sicily, the people repudiate not only the Tuscan dialect but the Italian name. Fifteen or twenty of the provincial dialects have been reduced to writing, and more or less made known by the press; but one only has become a medium of communication beyond its own native borders. Every Italian, then, has two languages, one for his home, his fireside, his friends, the narrow plain or valley or mountain he calls his country; another, for all the world without; and he bestows the unkindly name of foreigner upon even his brother Italian, when his speech bewrays him as a native of an adjacent province.

The inconveniences of local dialects are infinite to the people of a country divided by them; and nothing but personal observation can enable us to realize the annoyances of a traveller, who, desiring to extend his observations beyond the sphere of the hotel and the museum, and to learn something of the rural and domestic life of the people, finds his curiosity hourly baffled by the impossibility of free communication with the humble classes of

many European countries, where the dialect changes almost at every post.

The philanthropist may extract some consolation out of this confusion, in the reflection that the want of a community of speech, in countries of ancient, deep-rooted, and fixed institutions, though a great, is not an unmixed, evil. Like the corresponding peculiarities of local costume, occupation, and habits, it has its use in the scheme of Providence, as a means of checking the spread of popular excitements, and a too rapid movement of social changes, which, though ultimately beneficial, yet, like the rains of heaven, produce their best effect, when neither very hastily precipitated nor very frequently repeated.

We cannot, upon either side of the ocean, expect to be exempt from that general law of language, which, more than any thing else, argues it to be man's work, not his nature—the law of perpetual change. Man himself is immortal, immutable. His passions, his appetites, his powers, are everywhere and at all times, in kind, almost in degree, substantially the same; but whatsoever he fashions is infinite in variety of structure, frail in architecture, unstable in form, and transitory in duration. All this is eminently true of his language, and therefore, I repeat, to this law our speech must bow. But we may still avail ourselves of a great variety of means and circumstances peculiar to modern society, to retard the decay of our tongue, and to prevent its dissipation into a multitude of independent dialects.

The original causes of dialectic difference are very obscure; and, with the exception of those which depend on the physical influences of climate, they are usually very restricted in their territorial range. In countries naturally divided into numerous districts separated by mountains, rivers, marshes, or other obstacles to free intercommunication, every isolated locality has usually its own peculiarities of speech, more or less distinctly marked in proportion as the community is more or less cut off from intercourse with the nation at large. As the construction of roads, canals, and other means of transport, opens new channels and increased facilities of commerce, these peculiarities disappear; and in all parts of the civilized world, such internal improvements are rapidly extending, and numerous local dialects, and even some independent languages, seem doomed to a speedy extinction.

The causes which tend to extirpate existing dialectic peculiarities, are even more powerfully influential in preventing the formation of diversities; and the physical character of our own territory is such as to encourage the hope that our speech, which, if not absolutely homogeneous, is now employed by 40,000,000 of men, in one unbroken mass, with a uniformity of which there is perhaps no other example, will escape that division which has shattered some languages of the Old World into fragments like those of the confusion of Babel. The geography of the United States presents few localities suited to human habitation, that are at the same time inaccessible to modern improved modes of communication. The carriage-road, the railway, the telegraph, the mails, the newspaper, penetrate to every secluded nook, address themselves to every free inhabitant, and speak everywhere one and the same dialect.

Independently of the influences of physical improvement, or rather perhaps as a fruit of it, there are circumstances in the condition of modern society which are constantly active in the eradication of its minor differences, and in producing a general amalgamation of all its constituents, and a harmony between all instrumentalities not inherently discordant. Men, though individually less stationary, less attached to locality, are becoming more gregarious in the mass; the social element is more active, the notion of the solidarity and essential unity of particular nations, if not of the race, is more a matter of general consciousness; the interests of different classes and districts are more closely interwoven, and the operations of governments are more comprehensive and diffused, than at any former historical epoch. Look, for instance, at the influence of the monetary corporations connected with finance, with internal improvements, with fire-insurance, and with manufactures. The negotiability of their capital diffuses their proprietorship through wide regions of territory, through all classes of society. Their administration requires frequent communication between their shareholders, and between the direction and its numerous agents, as well as with the millions who in one way and another are affected by their operations, and thus every one of these corporations, mischievous as in many respects their influence is, serves as a bond of connection, a means and an occasion of more intimate communication between

city and country, rude and cultivated, rich and poor. Add to these our great charities, the crowning glory of this age, which combine the efforts, harmonize the sympathies, and bring together in free communion thousands, who, but for such attractions, had never been led to act or think or speak in unison; and further, our political associations, which gather their annual myriads to listen to the living voice of eloquence from the mouth of one orator nursed on the banks of the Mississippi, of another who learned his English in the lumber camps of Maine, and of a third who dwells by the lakes of the great Northwest—all speaking, and so all teaching, one dialect of one tongue. In like manner, our Government, acting through its army, its navy, its revenue-service, its post-office, is continually mingling, in all its departments, the separate ingredients of our population, communing daily with the remotest corners, everywhere employing, and forcing all alike to employ, one form of syntax, one standard of speech, one medium of thought.

I believe the art of printing, especially by its creation of the periodical press, together with the general diffusion of education which the press alone has made possible, is the most efficient instrumentality in producing uniformity of language and extirpating distinctions of dialect. With modern facilities of transit and transport, and the present great tendency to centralization, the leading city periodicals are sure of almost universal circulation. They are more read and more quoted than any other sources of information. The improved accuracy of reporters makes the newspapers channels through which not the thoughts only, but almost the very accents of popular speakers, are published to the nation; and so swift is our postal communication, that words uttered to-day by a great orator in New York, are repeated to-morrow in every hamlet of a territory as large as the Spanish peninsula.

The influence of printing, and of a general ability to read, in first producing, and then maintaining, a uniformity of dialect, is remarkably and curiously exemplified in the Christian population of Hellas and Asia Minor.

The modern Greeks, as they are called for reasons of convenience and because of their community of speech, are a people, or rather group of fragments of peoples, very diverse in their origin

and very much scattered in their abodes, extending through the whole Turkish empire as well as the Hellenic territory proper, living in small communities, often separated by wide distances or by impassable natural barriers, surrounded by tribes speaking very different languages, and therefore exposed to continual and discordant corruptions of speech; at the same time they have, in general, little relationship to the old Hellenic race, few common political interests, and little social or commercial intercourse. Their only bond of real union is their creed, which, among them, supplies the same place that community of blood does in other nations. The ancient Greeks, occupying the same localities, much more nearly allied in blood, more closely connected politically, possessing greater facilities and motives for personal intercommunication, often gathering from their remotest colonies at the great metropolitan festivals of Athens, of Corinth, and other Hellenic cities, and, above all, possessed of a common literature whose choicest dainties were the daily bread of every Greek intellect, nevertheless, not only spoke, but wrote, in dialects distinguished by palpable differences of articulation, inflection, syntax, and vocabulary. The modern Greeks, on the other hand, both speak and write, not indeed with entire uniformity, yet, saving some limited though remarkable local exceptions, with a general similarity of dialect very seldom found in languages whose territorial range is so great.

Now the influence which has been most active in producing this remarkable uniformity, is the circulation of printed books and journals employing the same vocabulary, and following the same orthography and the same syntax. Like effects have resulted from the same cause in Germany. The dialects are dying out, just in proportion as the more general dissemination of instruction multiplies readers and encourages the diffusion of printed matter. If printing has not yet conferred the same benefit upon Italy, it is because the detestable tyrannies, under which the peninsula has groaned for centuries, have fettered the press and excluded the masses from the advantages of education. Where there are neither books nor journals, there can be no readers; and where language is not controlled and harmonized by literature, the colloquial speech will be variable, irregular, and discrepant.

Of all countries known in history, the North American republic is most conspicuously marked by the fusion, or rather the absence, of rank and social distinctions, by community of interests, by incessant and all-pervading intercommunication, by the universal diffusion of education, and by abundant facility of access, not only to the periodical conduits, but to the permanent reservoirs of knowledge. The condition of England is in all these respects closely assimilated to that of the United States; and not only the methods, but the instruments, of popular instruction are fast becoming the same in both; and there is a growing conviction among the wise of the two great empires, that the highest interests of both will be promoted by reciprocal good-will and unrestricted intercourse, perilled by jealousies and estrangement.

Favored, then, by the mighty elective affinities, the powerful harmonic attractions, which subsist between the American and the Englishman as brothers of one blood, one speech, one faith, we may reasonably hope that the Anglican tongue on both sides of the Atlantic, as it grows in flexibility, comprehensiveness, expression, wealth, will also more and more clearly manifest the organic unity of its branches, and that national jealousies, material rivalries, narrow interests, will not disjoin and shatter that great instrument of social advancement which God made one, as He made one the spirit of the nations that use it.

